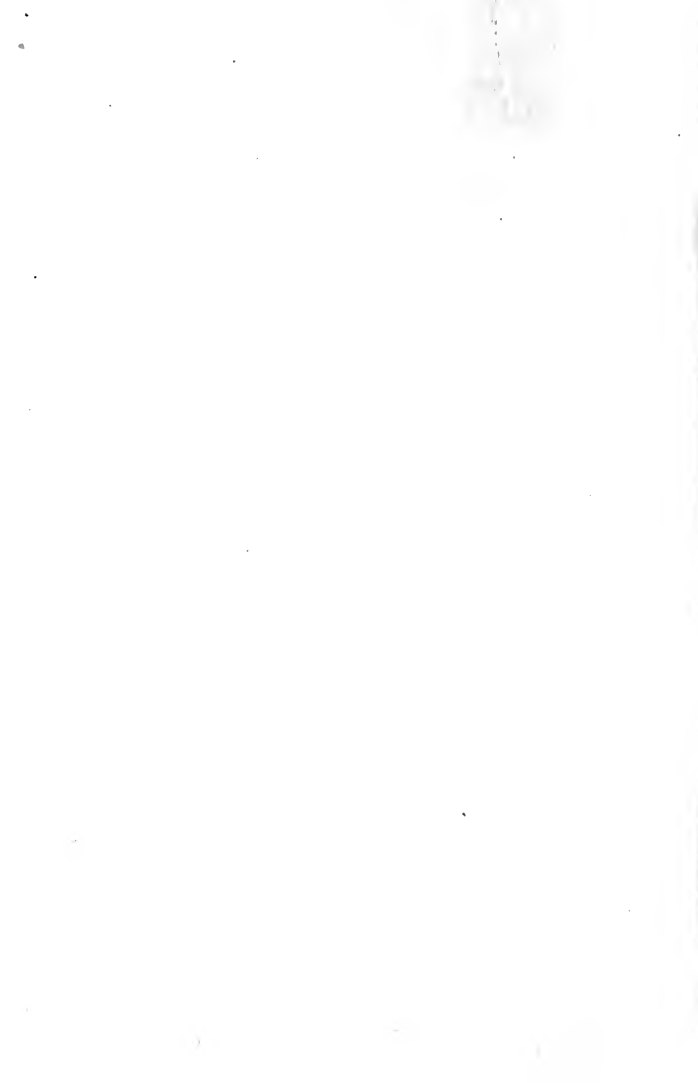
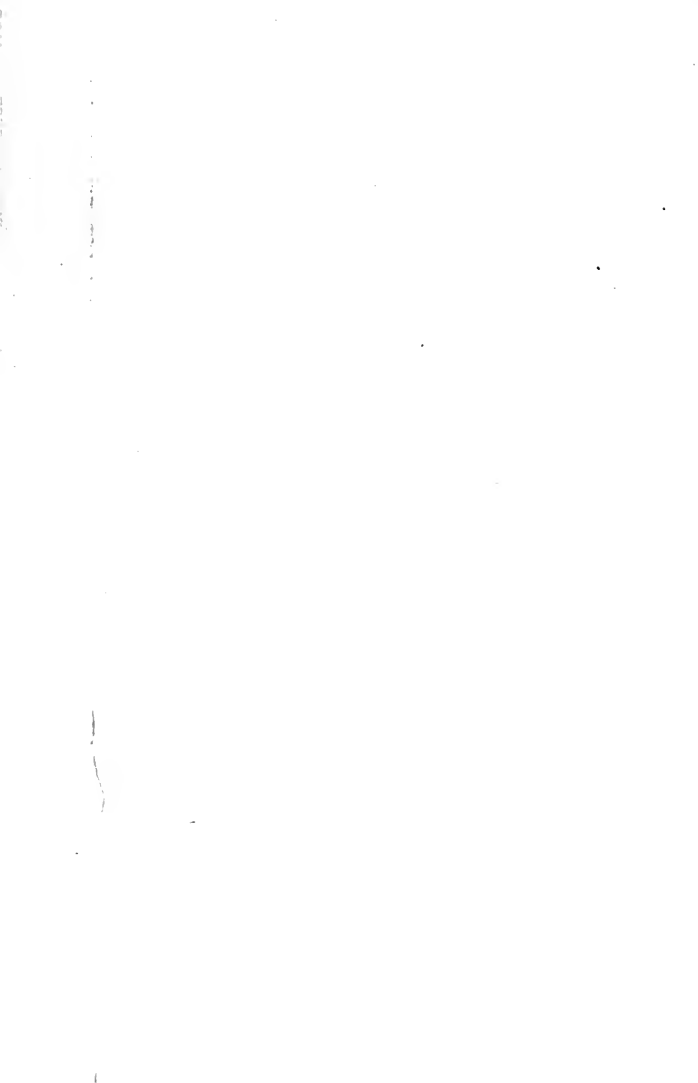


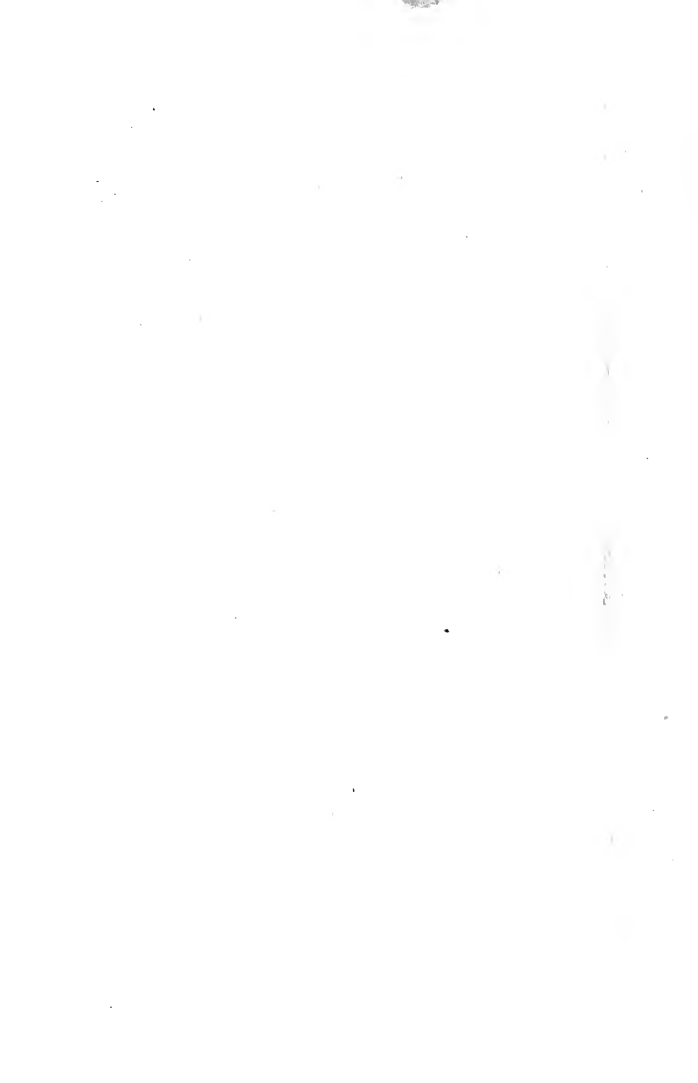
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

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EVANGELINE

And the Evangeline Country

by

H. W. LONGFELLOW

With an Introduction by

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COLLINS
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INTRODUCTION

THERE is a legendary quality about *Evangeline*. The illusion is due partly to the fact that it is the story of a people whom the main currents of history had swept by and partly to the diffusion of ethereal glory with which Longfellow clothes his narrative.

In 1838, not a hundred years after the eviction of the Acadians, Longfellow chanced on the rumour of the incident around which he wrote *Evangeline*. Already it seemed a folk-tale, a long-ago happening blurred by the overcrowding of more significant events. Strangely enough, it might have materialized in a novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne, had not he one evening taken his Pastor, the Rev. Horace Lorenzo Conolly of Salem, to dine with his old schoolmate Longfellow.

They had met at Bowdoin College in 1821—Nat Hawthorne a dark, moody youth of seventeen; Henry Longfellow an alert, precocious lad of fourteen. Two things only

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they had in common: the blood of many generations of New Englanders ran in their veins; and they already cherished literary ambitions. Ever holding fast the bond of friendship, they followed diverging destinies through life. So on this evening in 1838 they sat, in the hospitable dining-room of Craigie House—Hawthorne the solitary, haunted by the ghost of his ancestral conscience, pursuing his slow dark way towards posterity; Longfellow the much-travelled young professor, already enjoying tangible literary success.

Conolly, sitting between them, tossed casually into the conversation the anecdote which Hawthorne notes in his diary: “—of a young couple in Acadie. On their marriage-day all the men of the Province were summoned to assemble in the church to hear a proclamation. When assembled, they were seized and shipped off to be distributed through New England, among them the new bridegroom. His bride set off in search of him—and at last found her bridegroom on his death-bed. The shock was so great it killed her likewise.”

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Did the Pastor, having thrown this challenge into the ring, lean back amused to watch novelist and poet pounce upon this slender thread of plot? But at that time Hawthorne's range was limited to purely local subjects and settings; a story about French Catholics in Canada was something as yet beyond his sphere. To Longfellow, who had gleaned poetic material from his two European sojourns, it was a bait luring him to themes closer home.

Nine years later, *Evangeline* was finished. It was Longfellow's first poem on a North American theme, and his first long work in that balanced rhythm since so familiarly associated with him—the English hexameter.

In his research for *Evangeline*, Longfellow harked back along a fascinating and unfrequented by-path of history, which we too must tread if we would fully appreciate the poem. The beckoning will-o'-the-wisp of an idea evoked in him questions which his poem re-awakens in us: who were the Acadians? Where was their home? Why were they driven forth?

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In 1604, the fogs shrouding the steep coasts of the Maritimes parted to disclose Act One of the drama of New World colonization. Those who watched Cape Sable loom out at them were gay and daring envoys of a gay and daring King—de Monts, Poutrincourt, and Champlain.

The reign of Henry IV. had been busy and dangerous. In striving to unify his Kingdom, split geographically into warring provinces and spiritually into wrangling creeds, he swerved from Catholic to Huguenot as expediency demanded until 1598, when his Edict of Nantes brought all the provinces under his control and granted religious liberty to papist and dissenter alike. Having thus set his house in order, he looked out eagerly across the seas for new fields of conquest.

Due to Cartier's discoveries (1534-42) France claimed all the Americas North of the sphere of Spanish influence. Until 1604 she had been compelled to leave it at that. But now, only six years after the momentous Edict, she was reaching out towards the New World's unplumbed treasure-store.

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These gallant gentlemen brought with them the spirit of Henry's court. Champlain, greatest of them all, was then in his middle thirties, already a soldier, mariner and explorer of renown; but his Canadian years lay yet before him. His lone vigil at Quebec; his sojourns among hostile Indians; the bickerings of unscrupulous traders, meddling Intendants, and bigoted priests, had not yet soured for him the heady wine of sheer adventure. Life at Port Royal in Acadia was one that challenged heroes; and they were heroes who met it, with a laugh and a song. Champlain instigated "The Order of Good Cheer," and all the venturers entered into the hearty and rollicking spirit of it. Like the Duke's band in the Forest of Arden, "They fled the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world."

Canada's first social club served a dual purpose. The little band, beleaguered against a continent of wilderness, needed it to keep morale and camaraderie at high level. Also, it endeared them to the Micmacs, who were admitted to the festivities as a matter of course. The new-comers spoke French flavoured

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with the coastal accents of Brittany and Normandy; they found Acadia peopled with a branch of the Algonquins which also had its peculiar dialect, distinct from that of its parent tribe. In its early years, the colony was mainly a centre from which fur-seeking or chart-making expeditions could set out; and this accorded with the habits of the nomad Micmcas. The French came with a fanfare of trumpets, a flourish of Fleur-de-lys. With Crucifix, blue-mantled Virgin, and all the deep drama of the Mass, they set about saving the souls of their savage brethren. It was a language easy for the Micmacs to understand; they too had their seasons for feasts, and their pagan sun-worship was fraught with ceremonial. They returned the compliment of admittance to the Order by taking the French with them to their favourite hunting-grounds; guiding their course along unknown waterways; and showing them herbs to combat the diseases contingent upon pioneering.

Fate sent a chronicler in 1606, in the person of Marc Lescarbot, a frail but indomitable Parisian lawyer. Let the lusty barons provide

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venison for the feast; it was Marc who led off the stories after the toasts went round. It was Marc who wrote Canada's first play, a laughing defiance flung in the teeth of the wilderness. Were the priests all away amissioning? Marc gracefully obliged in their good offices for the garrison. It was Marc who appeared triumphantly at the door of the fort, calling the others to witness the first-fruits of his gardening venture. And when all the other torches of the fort were dimmed, and the mighty hunters slept off the day's exploits and feastings, a taper still shone at the window where Marc Lescarbot's quill scribbled away at his diary, which is preserved for us as a witty Odyssey of the brave days when Acadia was young.

Affairs were not always idyllic at Port Royal, however. The black day came in 1607 when de Monts learned that the rival traders of the French coastal towns had succeeded in their machinations against him to revoke his Acadian charter. But after three years, de Poutrincourt resumed Port Royal's thread, bringing with him two venturesome lads—his son Charles de Bein-

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court and friend Charles la Tour, both in their early teens.

The next rift in Port Royal's story was due not to treachery at home but to a pirate raid from Virginia—for Captain Argall's destruction of the settlement in 1613 deserves no more official name. But although England now laid parchment claim to the territory, changing its name, and creating the Order of the Baronets of Nova Scotia, with many high-sounding schemes for its occupation, the French still held sway in Acadia. Poutrincourt was dead; but Biencourt and his comrades took to the woods, trusting themselves to their Micmac allies, and biding their time until the Province would be restored to France.

Young Biencourt died in the forest, bequeathing his rights in Acadia to Charles la Tour. Presently la Tour emerged from hiding, fortified Cape Sable, and declared himself Lieutenant-General of Acadia. He sent his father, Claude la Tour, to France to canvass for a renewed colonizing venture. Returning to Acadia with his colonists, the elder la Tour fell into the hands of the

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pirate Kirke, and was taken prisoner to England.

Instead of resenting his captivity, Claude la Tour turned it to good account. He secured Baronetcies of Nova Scotia for himself and also for his son. Charles was furious when he learned that his loyalty had been lightly bandied about without his leave; but a day came when it stood him in good stead.

With the accession of Louis XIII. in 1617, a change came in the tenor of French colonial policy; but this was not felt in Acadia until 1633. The reign of Louis XIII. was virtually the reign of Richelieu, who continued the consolidation of the King's position at home and abroad in a much more business-like fashion than had the debonair Henry. Colonization in Henry's day had been mainly a matter of granting concessions and monopolies to gallant court favourites—a happy-go-lucky method, leading to many pitfalls. But now, as a succession of rugged, travel-stained Frenchmen sought audience with the stern Cardinal, unrolling their rough charts and recounting the vast fabulous resources of the New World, it was borne in upon

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Richelieu that the time was ripe for organizing colonization on a large scale, subordinating all the rival interests and monopolies to the State, and making the business of pioneers not simply exploitation but empire-building. With this in mind, the Company of New France was formed, and in 1633 Isaac de Razilly was commissioned as Lieutenant-General to take three hundred settlers from Touraine and Brittany to Acadia.

From these three hundred, the true Acadians are descended. Those preceding them were mainly exploiters, who took no root in the Province. These later comers were home-makers first, last and always—although from arrival to eviction, their peaceful endeavours were continually being thwarted by war-mongers.

Razilly's arrival created the phenomenon of two Lieutenants-General in one Province. La Tour, deriving his claim through Bien-court from the days of Henry IV., hotly resented the coming of this envoy of the new spirit of France. Razilly died in 1635, appointing Charnisay his successor, who took up the cudgels against la Tour for the sole

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mastery of the Province. These two swaggering feudal lords turned the wilderness into a battleground, leaving the settlers to fend for themselves.

In 1650 Charnisay died, leaving the field clear for his old rival. When Sedgewick's fleet took the Province for Cromwell in 1654, la Tour recalled with belated gratitude the Baronetcy of Nova Scotia which his father had thrust upon him. This enabled him to retain his stronghold, Fort St. John, and keep a hand in Acadian affairs.

In 1667 Acadia was restored to France; but her grim old watch-dog la Tour had died the year before, never to know that his vigil had not been in vain.

For the next few years the Province was fortunate in her Governor, Hubert de Grandfontaine; but the ablest Governor that France could commission could not prevent Port Royal from being a storm centre. It was continually on guard for English attacks, whether in the form of pirates or all the official grandeur of His Britannic Majesty's Navy. So in 1675 a number of settlers determined to find a new home, remote from

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the fort. Their friends the Micmacs guiding them, they set off North-Eastwards through the forest.

After a toilsome fifty miles, the forest thinned; the roaring sigh of Fundy's tide, which had sounded to their left throughout their journey, was now loud before them. They emerged and looked down upon a broad valley through which three rivers emptied themselves into the Minas Basin. Up over the dunes and marshes the tide came creeping; "and away to the Northward, Blomidon rose——" The travellers, weary of man-made forts, gazed for the first time upon that citadel of Nature. Here was journey's end. Here, absolved of the bickerings of Port Royal, they would begin anew to fulfil the dream they had cherished these forty years. Time and again through the years to come, when men sought with rough hands to destroy their dream, the Acadians turned their gaze to grand old Blomidon, symbol of God's steadfast omnipotence; and the integrity of their peace remained unbroken.

Added to their customary pioneering hardships was one more—Fundy's tide, the highest

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in the world. But with dogged patience, they proceeded to foil the ocean by means of dykes. This involved years of toil; but having come from the marshy districts of France, it was an old skill to them. They set up rows of trees, and between the rows they laid other trees lengthwise, filling this structure in with clay. The land thus reclaimed was exceedingly fertile. Longfellow speaks of flood-gates which were opened at certain seasons to admit the tides over the meadows. He was mistaken; a break in a dyke spelt disaster, and the peasants tended and mended their sea-walls vigilantly.

One October day in 1710, the Fleur-de-lys was run down from the Port Royal battlements forever. Governor Subercase led out his garrison with full honours of war, and Colonel Vetch led his British soldiers into Annapolis Royal, capital of Nova Scotia.

By this time, Minas was a prosperous community of 35 years' steady development. Along the valleys of the three rivers flowing into the Basin—Canard, Cornwallis and Gaspereau—sturdy stone farmsteads had arisen, clustering to form villages named

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for the district's leading families: Le Blanc, Terriot, Landry, Melanson, Hebert. Fringing on the calm and shining Basin were the meadows won from the sea, their stalwart dykes now green-clad. Beyond were the undyked dunes and marsh-lands, laved by the tides. Northward along the coastline, the blue hills crept up to Cape Blomidon. On the Southern hill-slopes of the farms grew the fruit-trees whose ancestors formed the orchards of Normandy. Willows from Touraine gave gracious shade to the white roads threading village to village in neighbourly intercourse. Flower and vegetable gardens flourished around every threshold.

It was a region of colour. In Spring the pastel petals gently foaming down through the orchards; ordered blossoming of housewives' gardens and exuberance of wild rose, arbutus and violet in the woods. In Summer—emerald-green of marsh meadows, Corot-green of willows, blue-green of coniferous forests. In Autumn the glad lusty burgeoning of the fruit; the maples golden as a trumpet-call, scarlet as a flambeau. And as if they could never have enough of it, the Acadians wove

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bright colours into their homespun apparel.

It was a region of music. Birds thronged the woods, pouring out their hearts in the sunshine. Thrice daily the Angelus chimed, "sprinkling the air with holy sounds." Of an evening, the traveller would be drawn to a neighbour's doorsill by the rollicking chansons of the merry gathering within.

It was a region of mists and fragrances. Mingled with the sweetness of the orchards was the bracing aroma of the evergreens and the good briny pungency borne on the seaward breeze. From the stone chimneys, the smoke of happy firesides wreathed up to blend with the sea-mists.

Sooner or later a poet was bound to discover this blessed land. We are grateful that it was Longfellow who made these colours, these harmonies, these mists and fragrances alive for us in *Evangeline*.

The many accounts of the Acadians' moral righteousness seem almost too good to be true. Such honesty, such piety, such neighbourliness, such absence of crime—was this a community of angels? Yet the visitor to Minas can understand how natural it was for

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folk in these surroundings to tread the ways of goodness. Not only were they good, but gay. Their arduous labours did not sour them. There was always time to pause for a word with a friend. The religion which keyed their lives was no cold, repressive creed. Three times a day, when the Angelus sounded, they looked up from their occupations with a smile to praise Le Bon Dieu. Though remote from the hubbub of world affairs, the gregarious Acadians did not grow dull, and never got "talked out." There was always another chanson, always another folk-tale. The "Order of Good Cheer," founded by the nobles at Port Royal was perpetuated by the peasants of Grand-Pré in spirit if not in name. "In short," remarks one Frenchman who visited them, "they all appeared joyful and gay and of one mind almost always."

Perhaps this pervading sense of aliveness was due to the fact that their peace and prosperity did not come cheap even in the best of times, and were all the more appreciated for that. With one hand, they held at bay the thundering tides of Fundy; with

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the other, they were ever pushing back the encroaching giants of the wilderness. They were ceaselessly watchful for pirate raids from the North, and constantly careful to keep the friendship of the savages of the forest to the South.

From 1710 onwards, they were faced with a new problem—the Oath of Allegiance to the British.

As successive companies of redcoats marched precisely along the willow-bordered roads into the heart of Minas, at their head the Governor in his scarlet and gold, it would be difficult to say which was the more puzzled: Governor, or governed.

These stern gentlemen, so punctiliously anxious to fulfil every jot and tittle of their duty, contrasted strangely with the paternal, pleasure-loving seigneurs whom the Acadians remembered. The peasants listened respectfully while their priest translated the awesome parchment with its magical seal which the Governor bore: "I do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty, his heirs and successors, according to law." Was that all that this pompous

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milord had travelled so far to demand? Assuredly, they would be faithful, upon the following conditions: that they remain in possession of their property; that they enjoy the free exercise of their religion; and that they be exempt from bearing arms.

To us, looking back, these stipulations seem only the Acadians' natural due. We are apt to condemn without a hearing the British treatment of them. We need to bear in mind that the rights of minorities which Anglo-Saxon peoples take almost too much for granted to-day, were in the early 18th century still in formation.

It may be said to the credit of these overworked gentlemen who governed Nova Scotia for the 45 years leading to the Eviction, that they were all willing to grant the first two stipulations. Even this must have cost them something. In those pre-Revolutionary times, the Province was considered part of New England, and the Governor was in a measure answerable to Boston as well as to London. The Nova Scotian forts were garrisoned mainly by New Englanders; and no greater contrast could have been found to

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the Acadian Catholics than these Yankee Puritans. It must have irked them to see the Acadians taking their pioneering with such apparent nonchalance. On their New England farms, it had been no laughing matter. There, they had been in constant terror of Indian raids; here, the befeathered Micmacs fraternized with the peasants. To them, religion meant adherence to a dolorous list of "thou shalt nots." To these Acadians, it was a matter of colour, drama and praise. To-day, the granting of religious liberty to a minority group in a democratic country is a matter of course; then, it was a truly magnanimous gesture. The Government granted it to the Acadians whilst withholding it from subjects in many other parts of their domain.

The real bone of contention was the third clause—exemption from bearing arms against the French. Naturally the Acadians were not going to fight against their own race; and did their resolution waver at any point, the Micmacs stood ready to remind them that they would pay for such disloyalty with their scalps.

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Yet the first considerations of the British had to be defence. They were hanging on to the Province by the skin of their teeth, with a handful of troops. Man-power was at a premium; Britain and France were using two continents and an ocean for battleground, and few able-bodied Britishers at that time had not seen service under arms. The main tides of conflict had swept past Acadia. Britain was concentrating now on gaining the greater prize of Canada. To the Home Government, even the defence of Acadia was an afterthought. Its colonization was out of the picture entirely. The Lords of Trade sent the Governor development schemes by the ream—but no men or money to back these projects.

Their attitude towards the Acadians therefore was not what they could do for them, but how many uses they could put them to. If they were not dependable to bear arms against a French attack, they were a dead weight on the Province. Yet, inasmuch as they were keeping the land cultivated until such time as England could spare money on colonization of her own, they were useful.

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Gracious Majesty George II. with all the dignity he could command; but in dealing with the Oath he magnanimously took it upon himself to grant the Acadians complete exemption from bearing arms.

This infuriated Armstrong; but to announce to these Acadians that the Oath they had taken was void and that they must swear anew to the unmodified version, would be to unsettle their minds and create grave difficulties. Therefore he let the modified form stand, for those who had taken it. He took care, however, to see that the Annapolis Acadians should take the unmodified Oath. But they had heard of the leniency with which the others had been treated, and called a meeting of their own wherein they passed a resolution offering to take the Oath on Wroth's conditions. Armstrong arrested their deputies, stating that they were "guilty of several enormous crimes" in calling their own meeting and in "framing a rebellious paper."

Armstrong's weathercock tactics bewildered and infuriated the Acadians. He also failed to keep peace with the Indians or to establish good relations with the priests, the spokesmen

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of the people. Finally Governor Philipps, his popular predecessor, was recalled to restore tranquility to the ruffled Province. His first act on returning was to clarify the problem of the Oath by administering it anew in its modified form to the whole Province, including even the incalculable Indians. This so satisfied the Acadians that ever after when the question of the Oath was raised, they professed their willingness to conform to it "as we did in Governor Philipps' time." Unfortunately this did not always accord with the ideas of the Governor in office.

After Philipps came Armstrong again, until his moody career terminated in suicide in 1739. Next year saw the accession of the ablest and most popular Governor to fill the office prior to the Eviction; and the coming to Acadia of the man who was to cause him the most trouble. These were Major Paul Mascarene and Abbe le Loutre.

No man knew Acadia more thoroughly, or had more title to Acadian loyalty, than Mascarene. The story of his boyhood awaits discovery by the historical romancer. His Huguenot parents were hiding in a charcoal-

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burner's hut from the wrath of Louis XIV.'s henchmen following the revoking of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 when he was born. Leaving the baby with an uncle, they fled to Utrecht. At the age of twelve, Paul set out by means of many disguises and hair-breadth escapes to rejoin his parents; but on reaching Utrecht at last, he found that his father had died two days before. From thence he took refuge in England, training for a military career. He was with Vetch at the taking of Port Royal, winning promotion for gallantry. From then onward he was active in the Province's administration.

His stormy youth had given him an invaluable legacy of courage. His family's sufferings through religious intolerance made him sympathetic towards the Acadians' plea for liberty of conscience. A Huguenot from Southern France, he was beloved and respected by these Catholic, Breton-descended Acadians. As a minor Government official he had traversed the whole Province, making painstaking surveys and reports, establishing forts at strategic points, and negotiating treaties with the Indians. His absence from head-

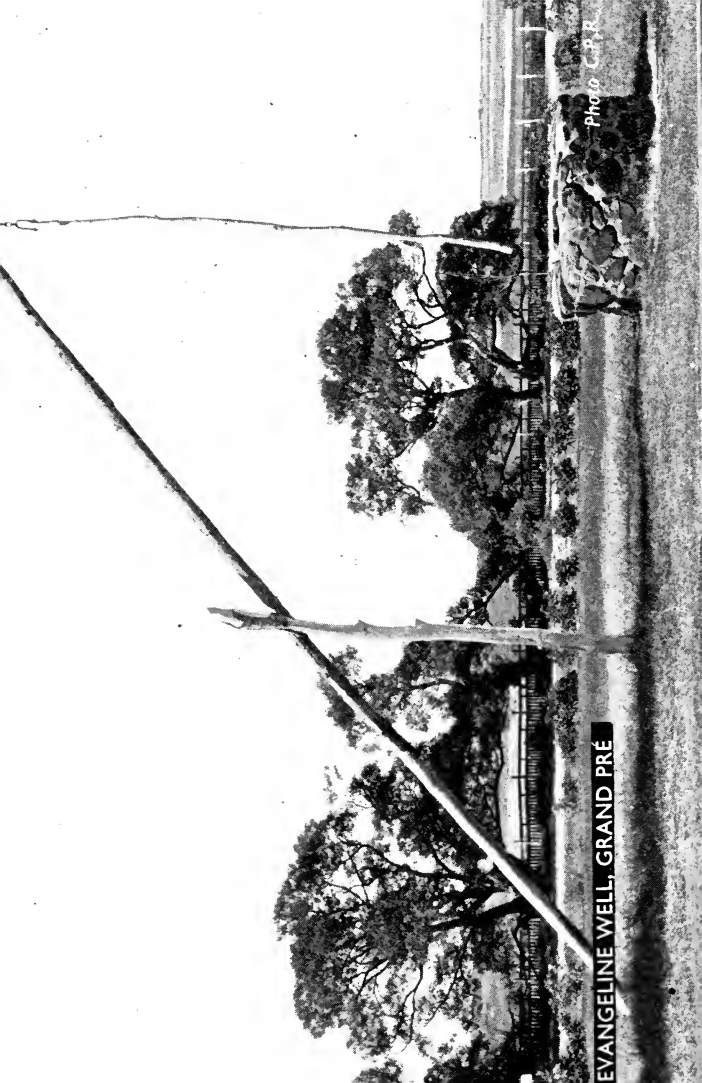
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quarters was a signal for the barometer of governmental diplomacy to fall to danger-level. One day he returned to Annapolis to find the Governor dead by his own hand, the Council at loggerheads, and the soldiers mutinous. Under such conditions he was called upon to assume command.

A series of Indian risings heralded the inauguration of Abbe le Loutre's Acadian campaign. France had begun to play upon the second weakness inherent in the Treaty of Utrecht. The matter of the "Ancient Boundaries," so hastily slurred over at the Council table, was now thrown up in ugly light. Pressure from Louisbourg had been playing over the Province ever since 1713. Now came a flank attack: pressure from Quebec.

The English assumed that the "Ancient Boundaries" embraced, besides Nova Scotia proper, all the territory that is now New Brunswick. The French asserted that these boundaries terminated across the Isthmus of Chignecto, near the Acadian settlement of Beaubassin. A committee representing both Powers was appointed to thrash this out.





EVANGELINE WELL, GRAND PRÉ

Photo C.P.R.

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In the long meantime, no step was supposed to be taken by the parties on the spot; but each took as much liberty as they dared, under the excuse of keeping an eye on their interests until the matter should be resolved to mutual satisfaction.

Quebec had always kept a hand in Acadian affairs by means of the priests. Although Acadia was British, it was still in ecclesiastical matters part of the diocese of Quebec. The Acadians, being mainly illiterate, had no seminaries wherein to train their own curés, and were thus dependent for spiritual shepherding upon Jesuits and Recollets from Canada. The British looked askance at this; but they had to allow it as part of the religious freedom they had granted. However, most of the missionaries regarded the Province simply as a field for winning more souls to the Kingdom of Heaven; and the less meddling they had with earthly Kingdoms of any flag, the better. Even in Canada, the Jesuits had resented the encroachment of contaminating influences from fort or trading station near their missions. In Acadia they entered politics only to the extent of

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championing the cause of their parishioners against injustice from whatever quarter. Longfellow truly typifies these conscientious and devoted men in "Father Felician."

The firebrand le Loutre was an exception—propagandist first, priest afterwards. With Beaubassin for headquarters, he stormed throughout the Province, inciting the Indians to strife. From time to time this strange cleric paused in his violent career to make a handsome gesture of chivalry—freeing prisoners, returning women and children unharmed to their homes. The moment would pass; the thunderclouds would gather across his personality once more, and he would plunge into his task of urging the Micmacs on to slaughter.

Following the fall of Louisbourg in 1745, the Province was a triangle of tension. Annapolis Royal, at its Westernmost point, was the channel of British influence; Canso, on the Eastern nose of the Province, faced Louisbourg across the Bay, exposed alike to physical attack and to the infiltrations of French agents. At the head of the triangle was Beaubassin, the channel of influence from

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Quebec. At the heart of it all, its quiet willow-bordered roads resounding to the tramp of British troops, its auberges harbouring smooth-tongued Louisbourg agents, its coasts pirate-haunted, its surrounding woods, silently alive with le Loutre's watchful Micmacs, was Grand-Pré, the most truly Acadian of all the settlements. As its meadows were dyked against the ocean, so were the spirits of its folk staunch dyked against the tides of men. *Evangeline* gives the impression of an innocent, unruffled tranquility. But the peace of Minas was something sturdier; it was a resilient integrity, tried in the balance and not found wanting.

For its nine most critical years, Acadia was sound of heart—sound also of head. Having the confidence of his people, Mascarene was able to hold the Province against attack from within and without.

For France, stung to the quick at Louisbourg's loss, was mustering all her efforts to win it back, and with it all Acadia. Le Duc d'Anville sailed in command of the navy in June, and simultaneously Chevalier de Ramesay of Quebec marched his Canadians

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into Acadia. Alas for the fleet! It tottered into Chebucto Bay, wrecked by autumn gales, its crew ravaged by epidemic. But Ramesay, ignorant of this, went on towards Annapolis. However, winter caught up with him, and he was forced to retire to Beaubassin.

Here the ground had been well prepared for him. Le Loutre's Micmacs gathered from all over the Province to welcome Ramesay and his Canadians as deliverers from the English yoke. He lost no time in building a fort and in sending emissaries as far South as Minas, urging the Acadians to enlist in winning back the Province for France.

These met with more success than had partisan priest or insinuating agent. From 1746 onward we read of Acadians fighting beside the French. Yet, compared with the thousands of population, these were negligible—thirty or forty here; one or two hundred there. In many cases they were unwilling soldiers, coerced by the Indians.

If any young Acadians enlisted voluntarily, it was excusable. These swaggering hip-booted chevaliers, these roistering "runners

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of the woods" in their fringed deerskin jerkins and gaudy sashes, must have re-awakened half-buried memories of Acadia's Golden Age. Demure lasses like Evangeline must have granted them a shy, admiring glance; peasant lads like Gabriel must have had wild speculations as to whether the plodding pastoral existence of an Acadian farmer might not be exchanged for the devil-may-care life of a Canadian soldier of fortune.

But in the main, common sense prevailed; amid marching and counter-marching, the Acadians maintained neutrality. The Grand-Pré villagers, who had lately played host to the gay and reckless Canadians, were called upon in the winter of 1746 to offer hospitality to a detachment of New Englanders under Col. Arthur Noble, sent by Governor Shirley of Massachusetts to aid Mascarene in driving out the invaders.

To these five hundred men, survivors of shipwreck and toilsome marches through snow-clogged forests, the cosy little village must have seemed a haven indeed. Noble's objective was Ramesay's fort, Beausejour;

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but he and his men were in no condition to march the hundred miles thence into the teeth of a Northern blizzard. And surely the bleak grip of winter which held Acadia in thrall rendered them safe here from surprise. So with a sigh of relief these Puritan warriors settled down to hibernate, entering with as good a conscience as they might into the winter festivities of their kind, impartial hosts.

But news flies fast through the forest, any weather. Was it some lurking Micmac, or some venturesome Acadian, who bore it to Beausejour? It was good tidings to these courriers de bois, who laughed at the North wind. Rakishly cocking their coonskin caps, strapping on their fleet snowshoes, they stole off Southwards between the black-trunked trees of the forests, single file, shrouded in snow like an army of ghosts.

The Acadians wined them, and begged their guests to be prepared. But Noble scorned ghost tales—no human, he thought, could make a march in such weather. He and his men slept unconcerned in their beds every night.

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At Pisiquid, Ramesay's men paused to partake of a wedding celebration. Heartened by bread and cheese and cider, they crept on into the swirling night wind. The snow was man-deep.

Silent as birds they swooped down on the slumbering village. The sentry strained his ears; a twig snapped in the muffled moonlit silence. He sounded the alarum; next moment the village was up in arms. Lights streamed over the snow. High-pitched French oaths; deep tones of New Englanders invoking Jehovah, rang in the frosty air. Shots echoed; sabres swished and clattered under the moon. Beneath the naked willows lay the slain—Noble among them. Grand-Pré, impregnable shrine of peace, was stranger to bloodshed no more. It was a portent. In less than ten years, this little hamlet now so fiendishly alive was to lie stricken, its houses charred and blind, open to the sky.

The effect of this skirmish was to reinforce the Acadians' resolve against all who came threatening and cajoling for a commitment of their lives to the service of Mars.

In 1748 another chapter of the strife

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between Britain and France was halted by the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle. To the British, this was a signal to begin serious colonization of the lands her arms had gained. To the French, it heralded the restoration of Ile Royale and its fortress, and revived hopes of New World supremacy.

England's adoption of a colonization policy for Acadia was marked by her commissioning Edward Cornwallis to succeed Mascarene. He did not come alone, as had his predecessors; but in command of a fleet bearing 25,000 English colonists. Neither did he come to Annapolis. He sailed into Chebucto Bay; and soon its shores were loud with the axe, the falling of trees, and the ring of the hammer. Halifax was taking shape—a capital worthy of this new home for Englishmen, and a strong citadel strategically placed to challenge Louisbourg.

Cornwallis was bent on turning over a new leaf in every phase of the Province's affairs. He did not shirk the Oath, which Mascarene had refrained from urging upon the Acadians during his critical years of office. Cornwallis, primed with instructions

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from the Lords of Trade, was convinced, that with a little firmness he could clear up this Oath business once and for all. Was he not giving the Acadians every consideration—even trying to procure European colonists that might prove good neighbours for them? Therefore he would have no nonsense. They should show their gratitude by taking the Oath without reserve.

In July he made it known that the whole populace must take the unqualified Oath by October 15. Immediately he was besieged by deputies from every settlement, protesting that they had always been loyal according to the terms of Governor Philipps' oath, and that they were ready to swear again to this form. If they were not granted this, they would emigrate. The protest bore over a thousand signatures.

This document must have astounded Cornwallis. He had come so confidently from England to rule these folk. The prosperous farmsteads which he saw all about him attested to their love of home; but this formidable list of names proved they loved peace even more. To save his face he sent

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one more peremptory command to take the Oath; but when officer after officer reported how the settlers were gathering their goods and building boats in order to leave, he had to climb down. At Chignecto still flaunted the challenge of Beausejour, with all Quebec to back it. Behind Louisbourg's walls, fresh plans were being hatched for an attack. Here was no time to hand the enemy a present of a thousand man-power! He strove to halt the flitting; October 15, which was to have been the deadline, came and went like any other day. Nevertheless, he had frightened hundreds of families into French territory.

His next move was an attempt to make the Province safe for English settlers by check-mating the French forts. Beausejour, and now Fort Gaspereau in tranquil Minas, constituted an ever-present threat and reminder of French claims.

Fort Edward was built in Minas to glare at Gaspereau. Major Lawrence was chosen for the thornier task of raising a counter-fort to Beausejour. He came by way of Fundy; but Le Loutre and his Micmacs

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hotly opposed his landing. When he finally managed to lead ashore a body of troops, the Indians set Beaubassin village afire, forcing the Acadians to flee Northwards into Canada. Better that, thought the zealous Abbe, than be contaminated by this intrusion of British influence!

Lawrence was forced to retire. That Autumn he made a second, and successful attempt, and built Fort Lawrence. When La Corne of Beausejour sent him a note requesting a truce meeting, Lawrence retorted with characteristic brusque arrogance, and hostilities reopened. That winter, le Loutre perpetrated the blackest deed of his dark career. Captain Howe of Fort Lawrence, whose popularity was weaning the Acadians from French influence, was murdered by the Micmacs at Le Loutre's instigation.

In 1752 Acadia experienced the false calm that presages storm. At Halifax, and also at Quebec and Louisbourg, the Governors were more disposed to co-operate than to quarrel.

Governor Peregrine Hopson knew better than to pester the Acadians with the Oath.

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Like Mascarene, he preferred to judge their loyalty by deeds rather than by promises. His persistent fairness even won over the Indians to a point where a peace treaty could be negotiated.

The good faith which Hopson had nurtured between the Micmacs and the Government was smashed next year by two traders, Connor and Grace. Near death from shipwreck on Ile Dore, they were nursed back to health by the Indians; but they repaid their hosts by plundering their storehouses and bringing back their scalps as trophies to Halifax. Indian vengeance flared up throughout the Province. Poor Hopson, disappointed and wrecked in health, returned to England. In his place came Major Lawrence.

Again, Nova Scotia was to know a Governor who had seen previous service there. But whereas Mascarene's apprenticeship had served to foster mutual appreciation between Governor and governed, Lawrence's hasty temperament and unfortunate circumstances of his former Acadian sojourn, combined to bode ill for the future.

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To Lawrence, Acadia meant Beaubassin. Here the Acadians were most strongly partisan against the English. He nursed bitter recollections of his winter at Chignecto, made memorable by Howe's murder. He came with preconceived notions and a preconceived policy. Within six weeks of taking office, he had summed up the Province's affairs in a statement to the Lords of Trade. As for his policy, his one consuming determination was that the French forts must fall.

Shirley of Massachusetts agreed with him, and poured troops into the Province. On June 1, 1755, a force of 2000 appeared before Beausejour. At first the French put up a good resistance, about 200 Acadians fighting at their side. In all the Provincial archives, this is the largest body of Acadians recorded under arms. Keeping in mind that Beauassin was the largest settlement, and under the greatest provocation, these 200 are dwarfed beside the thousands who stood resolutely neutral. But when the French learned that they could expect no help from Louisbourg, their bold front collapsed. The Acadians

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begged Commandant Vergor to surrender, and with this he soon complied.

Fort Gaspereau surrendered without a struggle; for, true to their pacific character, the Minas Acadians refused the Commandant any armed assistance.

The taking of these forts removed forever the threat of French dominance. Let the gentlemen overseas quibble on about the "Ancient Boundaries." To all practical purposes, the matter was closed.

In Minas there was rejoicing. Here was the peace they had yearned for! Surely the matter of bearing arms would no longer be a moot point of the Oath, now that the Province was weathertight against the French. Now their life might resume its normal placid tenor.

In this jaunty mood, they addressed a petition to the Governor, requesting the restoration of their former privileges, denied them in war-time. Having maintained their fidelity in the face of French threats, they would continue faithful when their liberties were again granted. They wanted their canoes back—these had been taken away as

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the British accused them of using them to carry provisions to Beausejour. This they denied. They wanted their guns returned also, for hunting. "The possession of a gun did not induce them to rebel, neither did its withdrawal render them more faithful. Loyalty was a matter of conscience."

Lawrence misconstrued this optimism as sauciness, and arrested the deputies. A few days later, bewildered but dauntless, they appeared before the Council.

It was a familiar scene—the little deputation of peasants in their gay homespuns, men honoured in the hamlets they represented, among them the good Cure who interpreted their message to these stern gentlemen. But formerly there had been a mutual apprehension. The British, despite their bluff pomposity, had sought to conciliate; always their blustering stopped short of driving these folk over to the enemy. The Acadians, though frank and upstanding, had secretly dreaded the British power to sever them from their homes. But to-day there was something in the atmosphere—a shifting of the wind; the slow descending of a shadow.

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The Acadians stood firm in their naïve belief that they would suffer no further molestation. On the British part there was a sinister note of condescension. The Province was safe for the British—and it was the British who should enjoy it. The Acadians had served their purpose; fetched and carried for the military; made the wilderness to flourish—but now!

With a show of graciousness, Lawrence accepted their apology for any seeming impertinence in the petition. And now, since they were so loyally inclined, would they have the goodness to take the Oath?

The Acadians replied that they would take it as before, with the clause excusing them from bearing arms.

Council was adamant. The unmodified Oath was the only legitimate form. The deputies might have until next morning to decide upon taking it.

The Acadians adjourned with a shrug. This was an old story. After a little dispute it would assuredly straighten itself out as it always had done.

Next day they replied that they were not

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authorized to take the unrestricted Oath on behalf of the whole community, but must return and consult their people.

Then fell the thunderbolt. The Oath, they were told, was a personal act. Their refusal to take it was proof of treason. Furthermore, having once refused the Oath, they could have no more chances to take it, but must henceforth be regarded as French subjects.

The Acadians were trapped like mice. The capture of the French forts had sealed forever the door to Quebec. And now this question, which had stood open during all the years of British rule, was snapped shut by Lawrence with an iron finality.

Straightway they offered to take the Oath on any terms; but no, the chance was lost. They were clapped into irons and led away.

Having burned his boats, Lawrence must act quickly, without awaiting Royal sanction. In previous dispatches he had warned the Lords of Trade of his determination to "rid the Province of such perfidious subjects." Now he must make good his threat.

He set forth his cold-blooded decrees. To Col. Monckton was committed the purge

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of Beaubassin; Captain Murray at Fort Edward was to look after Pisiquad; Major Handfield was to evict Annapolis; and Minas was assigned to Colonel Winslow.

It was a cruel, wearisome business in all the settlements. Minas' story is made poignantly vivid for us in Longfellow's poem. It is meet that of all Acadia he chose Minas—most beautiful, most truly Acadian, least sullied by conflict. How heart-rending it must have been to be torn from such an Eden! Small wonder that in exile they were but living ghosts, who wept at the least mention of Acadia.

Longfellow takes great liberty with the time-factor, mercifully condensing the Eviction into a few days. In reality it began in late summer and dragged on into mid-winter.

Never was Grand-Pré so fair as on that August day when Winslow came blustering into the village to turn the church into a military camp. But his heart sank as he saw the harvesters cheerfully at work in the wheat-fields spreading like a golden sea around the church. The villagers were infallibly courteous, but they put him some embarrass-

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sing questions: Why were their deputies still detained at Halifax? What was the meaning of troops in the village and sloops of war in the Basin? Now that the war was over, would there not soon be an end to these tiresome interruptions of life?

Poor Colonel Winslow! Never had he thought, in all his years of service, that his adherence to duty would involve him in such a shabby task. Schooled to obedience, he did not quibble with Lawrence's orders; but as he stood up in Grand Pre church on September 5, to face the four hundred and eighteen men of the village, he was sick at heart.

His proclamation is perhaps the strangest mixture of grimness and pleading in military annals. Zealous partisans of the Acadian cause have deemed it cruel and hypocritical; but to the observer who strives to be impartial, it is the apology of a man struggling to reconcile conscience with duty. One black mark stands against him: in stating that it was the King's commission, he lied. Lawrence had taken matters into his own hands; indeed, when the Eviction was well under

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way, he received a letter from the Lords of Trade saying that the King did not wish the Acadians to be molested.

It is interesting to note how skilfully Longfellow incorporates the gist of this proclamation into his poem:

“Gentlemen, I have received from His Excellency, Governor Lawrence, the King’s Commission which I have in my hand. By his orders you are convened to hear His Majesty’s final resolution in respect to the French inhabitants of this his province of Nova Scotia, who for almost half a century have had more indulgence granted them than any of his subjects in any part of his dominions. What use you have made of it, you yourselves best know.

“The duty I am now upon, though necessary, is very disagreeable to my natural make and temper, as I know it must be grievous to you who are of the same species. But it is not my business to animadvert, but to obey such orders as I receive; and therefore without hesitation I shall deliver you His Majesty’s orders and instructions, namely:

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That your lands and tenements, cattle of all kinds and live stock of all sorts are forfeited to the Crown with all your other effects, saving your money and household goods, and that you yourselves are to be removed from this his province.

“Thus it is peremptorily His Majesty’s orders that all the French inhabitants of these districts be removed; and through His Majesty’s goodness I am directed to allow you liberty to carry with you your money and as many of your household goods as you can take without discommoding the vessels you go in. I shall do everything in my power that all these goods be secured to you, and that you be not molested in carrying them with you, and also that whole families shall go in the same vessel; so that this removal which I am sensible must give you a great deal of trouble may be made as easy as His Majesty’s service will admit; and I hope that in whatever part of the world your lot may fall, you may be faithful subjects, and a peaceable and happy people.

“I must also inform you that it is His Majesty’s pleasure that you remain in security

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under the inspection and direction of the troops that I have the honour to command."

The Acadians were stunned. Doomsday was come! The spectre that had haunted their happiness so long had taken grim shape. Then uproar broke out.

"Death to the English tyrants! We never have sworn them allegiance!" shouts Longfellow's Basil. We know this is not true—they had always granted the English the fullest measure of loyalty possible to them. But we may excuse anything the Acadians might have said or done in that hour.

The young men showed such spirited resistance that Winslow feared they would overcome his troops and escape. On September 10, he placed these lads on the five transports anchored in the Basin, fifty to each ship. They marched down to the shore, chanting psalms. Women and children lined the way, reaching out to touch the hand of their menfolk as they passed.

Longfellow makes this the actual day of embarkation; but it was not until October 8 that the families began to be taken to the

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boats. True to his word, Winslow made every effort to keep families together. He released the young men from the transports so that they might rejoin their people for the voyage. We are glad to know that he was so touched by Rene le Blanc's great age and gentle character that he tried to have him taken to his own home in Marshfield; but his good intentions miscarried; and the poor old gentleman landed at New York with his wife and only two of his twenty children.

But three hundred soldiers were inadequate to organize the embarkation of three thousand folk with their bundles of treasures. Many heart-breaking separations occurred. Winslow scanned the Basin frantically for more transports, only a few of which arrived. Finally he had to pack the people pell-mell like cattle into the few boats at his disposal.

"This task hangs heavy on my heart and hands," he confides to his diary. He and Murray at Fort Edward kept in constant touch, to bolster up each others' courage. Murray put up a bolder bluff, even suggesting a little celebration when the poor wretches were at last away.

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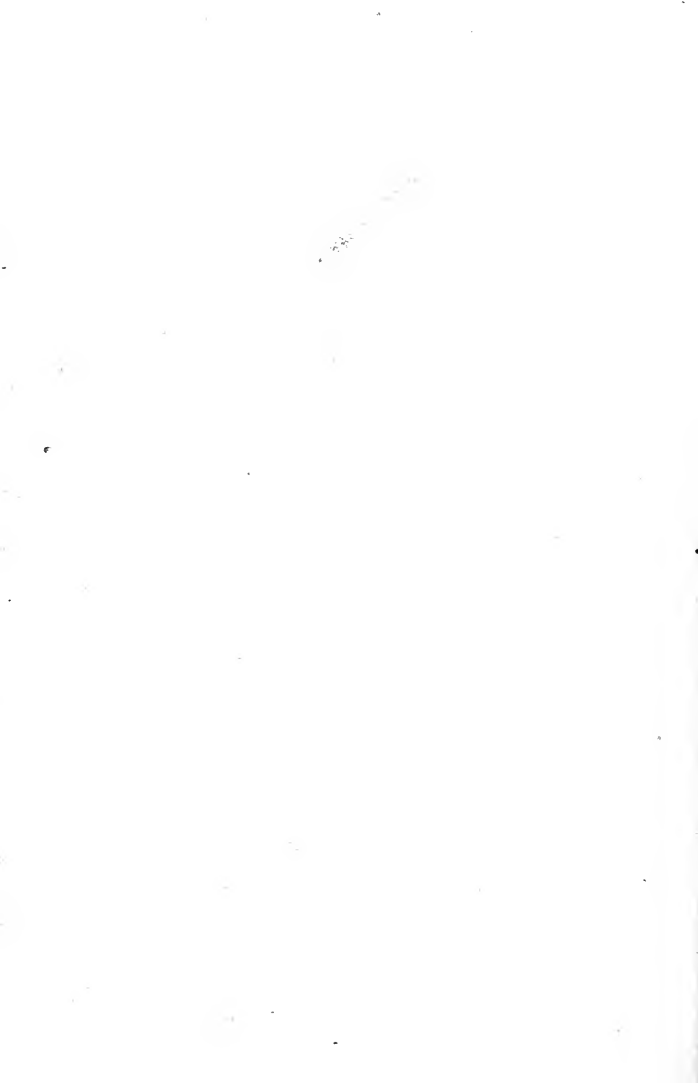
It was not until December that these gallant soldiers could toast the sailing of the last frigate. The gale which bore it out of Fundy shrieked a dirge for this people, crushed at last between the millstones of conquest.

They were scattered down the coast from New England to the West Indies. Like the seed of the sower, some fell upon good ground and some upon thorny ground. Most fortunate were those who found their way to balmy Louisiana, to be welcomed by folk of their own race. And after many years, in the time of a more generous governor, those whom the thorns of unkindness had failed to choke, returned to Acadia and made St. Mary's Shore one long village, where their quaint traditions of piety and peace are still maintained.

In Grand-Pré alone, nine hundred homesteads were razed to the ground. It took many years to heal that scar. "Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grande-Pré," wrote Longfellow, nearly a hundred years later. But due to the native genius of modern Acadians, and in an equal



THE COUNTRY NEAR GRAND PRÉ



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measure to the sympathetic interest which *Evangeline* aroused, Grand-Pré is to-day an hallowed shrine of loveliness, where lovers of literature, beauty and peace come from far and wide to pay tribute to these good folk.

“Whose lives glided on like rivers that
water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting
an image of heaven.”

JOAN HUNTLEY.

EVANGELINE

A TALE OF ACADIA

THIS is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green,
Indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad
and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that
rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced
neighbouring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate
answers the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where
are the hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the
woodland the voice of the huntsman?

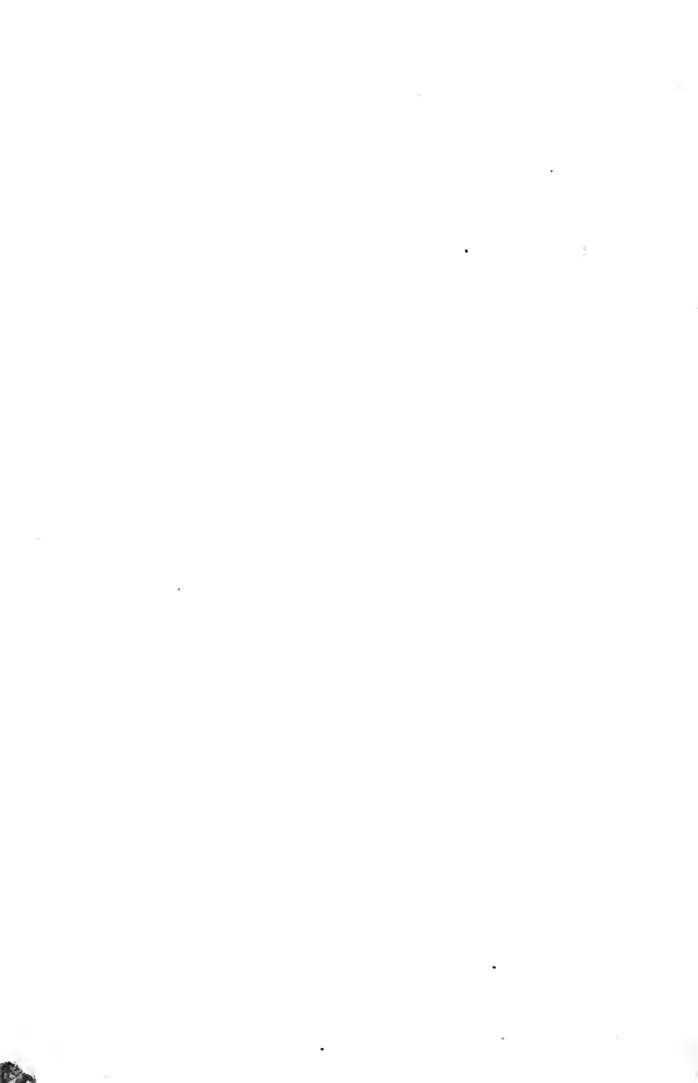
EVANGELINE

Where is the thatch-roofed village, the
home of Acadian farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers
that water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but
reflecting an image of heaven?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the
farmers for ever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the
mighty blasts of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and
sprinkle them far o'er the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the
beautiful village of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes,
and endures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and
strength of woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition, still sung
by the pines of the forest;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadia, home
of the happy.



OLD ACADIAN WILLOWS AT GRAND PRÉ



PART THE FIRST

I

IN the Acadian land, on the shores of
the Basin of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village
of Grand-Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows
stretched to the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture
to flocks without number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had
raised with labour incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at
stated seasons the flood-gates
Opened, and welcomed the sea to
wander at will o'er the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax,
and orchards and cornfields

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Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the
plain; and away to the northward
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and
aloft on the mountains

Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists
from the mighty Atlantic

Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er
from their station descended.

There, in the midst of its farms, reposed
the Acadian village.

Strongly built were the houses, with
frames of oak and of hemlock,

Such as the peasants of Normandy built
in the reign of the Henries.

Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-
windows; and gables projecting

Over the basement below protected and
shaded the doorway.

There in the tranquil evenings of
summer, when brightly the sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the
vanes on the chimneys,

Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white

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caps and in kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with
distaffs spinning the golden
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose
noisy shuttles within doors
Mingled their sounds with the whir of the
wheels and the songs of the maidens.
Solemnly down the street came the
parish priest, and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he
extended to bless them.
Reverend walked he among them; and
up rose matrons and maidens,
Hailing his slow approach with words of
affectionate welcome.
Then came the labourers home from
the field, and serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed.
Anon from the belfry
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over
the roofs of the village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds
of incense ascending,

EVANGELINE

Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes
of peace and contentment.

Thus dwelt together in love these simple
Acadian farmers,—

Dwelt in the love of God and of man.

Alike were they free from

Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and
envy, the vice of republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors,
nor bars to their windows;

But their dwellings were open as day
and the hearts of the owners;

There the richest was poor, and the
poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and

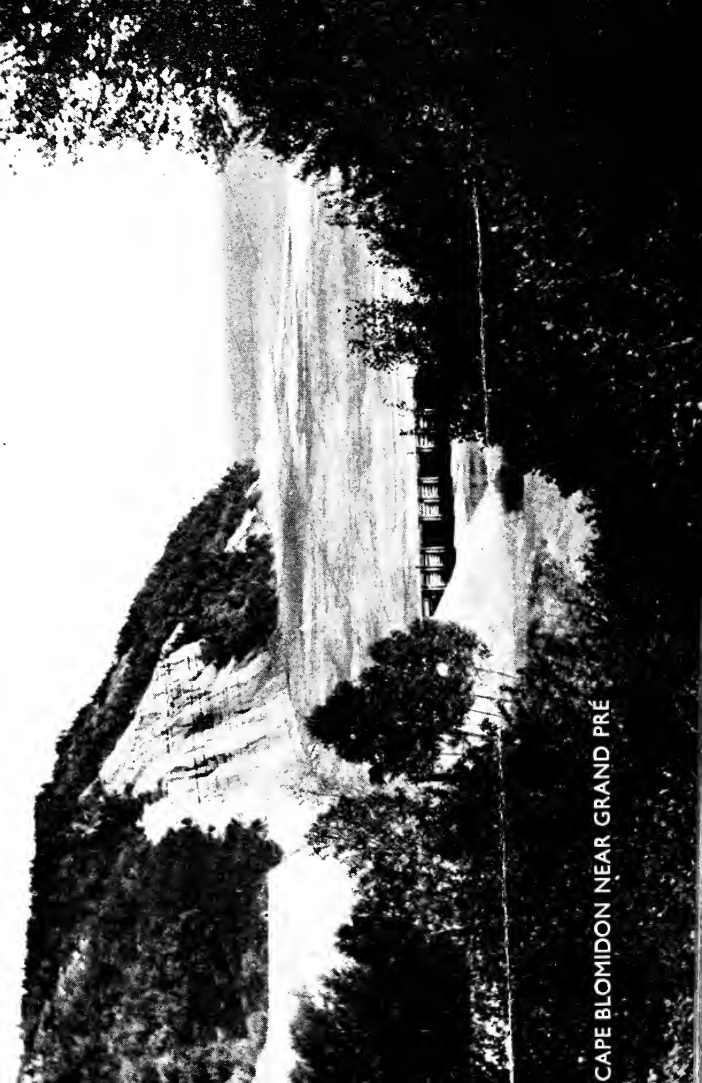
nearer the Basin of Minas,

Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest
farmer of Grand-Pré,

Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with
him, directing his household,

Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and
the pride of the village.]





CAPE BLOMIDON NEAR GRAND PRÉ

EVANGELINE

Stalwarth and stately in form was the
man of seventy winters;

Hearty and hale was he, an oak that
is covered with snowflakes;

White as the snow were his locks, and his
cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of
seventeen summers.

Black were her eyes as the berry that
grows on the thorn by the wayside,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed be-
neath the brown shade of her tresses!

Sweet was her breath as the breath of
kine that feed in the meadows.

When in the harvest heat she bore to
the reapers at noontide

Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in
sooth was the maiden.

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn,
while the bell from its turret

Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as
the priest with his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters

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 blessings upon them,
Down the long street she passed, with
 her chaplet of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap, and her
 kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings,
Brought in the olden time from France,
 and since, as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child,
 through long generations.
But a celestial brightness—a more
 ethereal beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her
 form, when, after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with
 God's benediction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like
 the ceasing of exquisite music.

 Firmly builded with rafters of oak,
 the house of the farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding
 the sea; and a shady
Sycamore grew by the door, with a

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woodbine wreathing around it.

Rudely carved was the porch, with seats
beneath; and a footpath
Led through an orchard wide, and dis-
appeared in the meadow.

Under the sycamore-tree were hives over-
hung by a penthouse,

Such as the traveller sees in regions
remote by the roadside,

Built o'er a box for the poor, or the
blessed image of Mary.

Farther down, on the slope of the hill,
was the well with its moss-grown

Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it
a trough for the horses.

Shielding the house from storms, on the
north, were the barns and the farm-
yard.

There stood the broad-wheeled wains
and the antique ploughs and the
harrows;

There were the folds for the sheep; and
there, in his feathered seraglio,

EVANGELINE

Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed
the cock, with the self-same
Voice that in ages of old had startled
the penitent Peter.

Bursting with hay were the barns, them-
selves a village. In each one
Far o'er the gable projected a roof of
thatch; and a staircase,
Under the sheltering eaves, led up to
the odorous corn-loft.

→ There too the dove-cot stood, with its
meek and innocent inmates
Murmuring ever of love; while above
in the variant breezes
Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled
and sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the
world, the farmer of Grand-Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline
governed his household.

Many a youth, as he knelt in church
and opened his missal,

EVANGELINE

Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of
his deepest devotion;

Happy was he who might touch her
hand or the hem of her garment!

Many a suitor came to her door, by the
darkness befriended,

And, as he knocked and waited to hear
the sound of her footsteps,

→ Knew not which beat the louder, his
heart or the knocker of iron;

Or at the joyous feast of the Patron
Saint of the village,

Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in
the dance as he whispered,

Hurried words of love, that seemed a part
of the music.

But, among all who came, young Gabriel
only was welcome;

Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the
blacksmith,

Who was a mighty man in the village,
and honoured of all men;

For, since the birth of time, through-

EVANGELINE

out all ages and nations,

→ Has the craft of the smith been held in
repute by the people.

Basil was Benedict's friend. Their
children from earliest childhood,

Grew up together as brother and sister;
and Father Felician,

Priest and pedagogue both in the village,
had taught them their letters

Out of the self-same book, with the
hymns of the church and the plain-
song.

But when the hymn was sung, and the
daily lesson completed,

Swiftly they hurried away to the forge
of Basil the blacksmith.

There at the door they stood, with
wondering eyes to behold him

Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the
horse as a plaything.

Nailing the shoe in its place; while near
him the tire of the cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a

EVANGELINE

circle of cinders.

Oft on autumnal eves, when without in
the gathering darkness

Bursting with light seemed the smithy,
through every cranny and crevice,

Warm by the forge within they watched
the labouring bellows,

And as its panting ceased, and the sparks
expired in the ashes,

Merrily laughed, and said they were
nuns going into the chapel.

Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the
swoop of the eagle,

Down the hillside bounding, they glided
away o'er the meadow.

Oft in the barns they climbed to the
populous nests on the rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous
stone, which the swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to
restore the sight of its fledglings;

Lucky was he who found that stone in
the nest of the swallow!

EVANGELINE

Thus passed a few swift years, and they
no longer were children.

He was a valiant youth, and his face,
like the face of the morning,
Gladdened the earth with its light, and
ripened thought into action.

She was a woman now, with the heart
and hopes of a woman.

“Sunshine of Saint Eulalie” was she
called; for that was the sunshine
Which, as the farmers believed, would
load their orchards with apples;

She, too, would bring to her husband’s
house delight and abundance,
Filling it with love and the ruddy faces
of children.

Now had the season returned, when
the nights grow colder and longer,
And the retreating sun the sign of the
Scorpion enters.

Birds of passage sailed through the
leaden air, from the ice-bound,
Desolate northern bays to the shores of
tropical islands.

Harvests were gathered in; and wild
with the winds of September
Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob
of old with the angel.

All the signs foretold a winter long and
inclement.

Bees, with prophetic instinct of want,
had hoarded their honey

Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian
hunters asserted

Cold would the winter be, for thick was
the fur of the foxes.

EVANGELINE

Such was the advent of autumn. Then
followed that beautiful season,
Called by the pious Acadian peasants
the Summer of All-Saints!

Filled was the air with a dreamy and
magical light; and the landscape
Lay as if new-created in all the freshness
of childhood.

Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and
the restless heart of the ocean
Was for a moment consoled. All sounds
were in harmony blended.

Voices of children at play, the crowing
of cocks in the farm-yards,
Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and
the cooing of pigeons,

All were subdued and low as the mur-
murs of love, and the great sun
Looked with the eye of love through the
golden vapours around him;

While arrayed in its robes of russet and
scarlet and yellow,

Bright with the sheen of the dew, each

EVANGELINE

glittering tree of the forest
Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian
adorned with mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest
and affection and stillness.

Day with its burden and heat had
departed, and twilight descending
Brought back the evening star to the
sky, and the herds to the homestead.
Pawing the ground they came, and
resting their necks on each other,
And with their nostrils distended inhaling
the freshness of evening.

Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's
beautiful heifer,
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the
ribbon that waved from her collar,
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious
of human affection.

Then came the shepherd back with his
bleating flocks from the seaside,
Where was their favourite pasture.

EVANGELINE

Behind them followed the watch-dog,
Patient, full of importance, and grand
in the pride of his instinct,
Walking from side to side with a lordly
air, and superbly
Waving his bushy tail, and urging
forward the stragglers;
Regent of flocks was he when the
shepherd slept; their protector,
When from the forest at night, through
the starry silence the wolves howled.
Late, with the rising moon, returned
the wains from the marshes,
Laden with briny hay, that filled the
air with its odour.
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on
their manes and their fetlocks,
While aloft on their shoulders the
wooden and ponderous saddles,
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned
with tassels of crimson,
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks
heavy with blossoms.

EVANGELINE

→ Patiently stood the cows meanwhile,
and yielded their udders
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud
and in regular cadence
Into the sounding pails the foaming
streamlets descended.
Lowling of cattle and peals of laughter
were heard in the farm-yard,
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they
sank into stillness;
Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the
valves of the barn-doors,
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a
season was silent.

Indoors, warm by the wide-mouthed
fireplace, idly the farmer
Sat in his elbow-chair and watched how
the flames and the smoke-wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning
city. Behind him,
Nodding and mocking along the wall,
with gestures fantastic,

EVANGELINE

Darted his own huge shadow, and
vanished away into darkness.
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the
back of his arm-chair
Laughed in the flickering light; and the
pewter plates on the dresser
Caught and reflected the flame, as
shields of armies the sunshine.
Fragments of song the old man sang,
and carols of Christmas,
Such as at home, in the olden time, his
fathers before him
Sang in their Norman orchards and
bright Burgundian vineyards.
Close at her father's side was the gentle
Evangeline seated,
Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in
the corner behind her.
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest
was its diligent shuttle,
While the monotonous drone of the
wheel, like the drone of a bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song and united

EVANGELINE

the fragments together.
As in a church, when the chant of the
choir at intervals ceases,
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words
of the priest at the altar,
So, in each pause of the song, with
measured motion the clock clicked.

Thus, as they sat, there were footsteps
heard, and, suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door
swung back on its hinges.
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes
it was Basil the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart, Evangeline
knew who was with him.

“Welcome!” the farmer exclaimed, as
their footsteps paused on the thresh-
old,

“Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come,
take thy place on the settle
Close by the chimney-side, which is
always empty without thee;

EVANGELINE

Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe
and the box of tobacco;
Never so much thyself art thou as when
through the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy
friendly and jovial face gleams
Round and red as the harvest moon
through the midst of the marshes.”
Then, with a smile of content, thus
answered Basil the blacksmith,
Taking with easy air the accustomed
seat by the fireside:—
“Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever
thy jest and thy ballad!
Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou,
when others are filled with
Gloomy borebodings of ill and see only
ruin before them.
Happy art thou, as if every day thou
hadst picked up a horseshoe.”
Pausing a moment, to take the pipe
that Evangeline brought him,
And with a coal from the embers had

EVANGELINE

lighted, he slowly continued:—
“Four days now are passed since the
English ships at their anchors
Ride in the Gaspereau’s mouth, with
their cannon pointed against us.
What their design may be is unknown
but all are commanded.
On the morrow to meet in the church,
where his Majesty’s mandate
Will be proclaimed as law in the land.
Alas! in the meantime
Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts
of the people.”
Then made answer the farmer: “Perhaps
some friendlier purpose
Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps
the harvests in England
By untimely rains or untimelier heat
have been blighted,
And from our bursting barns they
would feed their cattle and children.”
“Not so thinketh the folk in the village,”
said, warmly, the blacksmith,

EVANGELINE

Shaking his head, as in doubt; then,
heaving a sigh, he continued:—

“Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau
Séjour, nor Port Royal.

Many already have fled to the forest,
and lurk on its outskirts,
Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious
fate of to-morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and
warlike weapons of all kinds;
Nothing is left but the blacksmith’s
sledge and the scythe of the
mower.”

Then with a pleasant smile made answer
the jovial farmer:—

“Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of
our flocks and our corn-fields,
Safer within these peaceful dikes, be-
sieged by the ocean,
Than our fathers in forts, besieged by
the enemy’s cannon.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night
may no shadow of sorrow

EVANGELINE

Fall on this house and hearth; for this
is the night of the contract.

Built are the house and the barn. The
merry lads of the village

Strongly have built them and well; and,
breaking the glebe round about them,

Filled the barn with hay, and the house
with food for a twelvemonth.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with
his papers and inkhorn.

Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice
in the joy of our children?"

As apart by the window she stood, with
her hand in her lover's,

Blushing Evangeline heard the words
that her father had spoken,

And, as they died on his lips, the worthy
notary entered.

III

Bent like a labouring oar, that toils in
the surf of the ocean,
Bent, but not broken, by age was the
form of the notary public;
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken
floss of the maize, hung
Over his shoulders; his forehead was
high; and glasses with horn bows
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of
wisdom supernal.
Father of twenty children was he, and
more than a hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and
heard his great watch tick.
Four long years in the times of the war
had he languished a captive,
Suffering much in an old French fort as
the friend of the English.
Now, though warier grown, without all
guile or suspicion,

EVANGELINE

Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient,
and simple, and childlike.

He was beloved by all, and most of all
by the children;

For he told them tales of the Loup-garou
in the forest,

And the goblin that came in the night
to water the horses,

And of the white Létiche, the ghost of
a child who unchristened.

Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen
the chambers of children;

And how on Christmas-eve the oxen
talked in the stable,

And how the fever was cured by a spider
shut up in a nutshell,

And of the marvellous powers of four-
leaved clover and horseshoes,

With whatsoever else was writ in the
lore of the village.

Then up rose from his seat by the fireside
Basil the blacksmith,

Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and

EVANGELINE

slowly extending his right hand,
“Father Leblanc,” he exclaimed, “thou
hast heard the talk in the village,
And, perchance, canst tell us some news
of these ships and their errand.”

Then with modest demeanour made
answer the notary public,—

“Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth
yet am never the wiser;

And what their errand may be I know
not better than others.

Yet am I not of those who imagine some
evil intention

Brings them here, for we are at peace;
and why then molest us?”

“God’s name!” shouted the hasty and
somewhat irascible blacksmith;

“Must we in all things look for the how,
and the why, and the wherefore?

Daily injustice is done, and might is
the right of the strongest!”

But without heeding his warmth, con-
tinued the notary public,—

EVANGELINE

“Man is unjust, but God is just; and
finally justice

Triumphs; and well I remember a
story, that often consoled me,

When as a captive I lay in the old French
fort at Port Royal.”

This was the old man’s favourite tale,
and he loved to repeat it

When his neighbours complained that
any injustice was done them.

“Once in an ancient city, whose name
I no longer remember,

Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue
of Justice

Stood in the public square, upholding
the scales in its left hand,

And in its right a sword, as an emblem
that justice presided

Over the laws of the land, and the hearts
and homes of the people.

Even the birds had built their nests in
the scales of the balance,

Having no fear of the sword that flashed

EVANGELINE

in the sunshine above them.
But in the course of time the laws of the
land were corrupted;
Might took the place of right, and the
weak were oppressed, and the mighty
Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced
in a nobleman's palace
That a necklace of pearls was lost, and
ere long a suspicion
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as a
maid in the household.
She, after form of trial, condemned to
die on the scaffold,
Patiently met her doom at the foot of
the statue of Justice.
As to her Father in heaven her innocent
spirit ascended,
Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose; and
the bolts of the thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled
in wrath from its left hand
Down on the pavement below the clatter-
ing scales of the balance,



GRAND PRE APPLE ORCHARD



EVANGELINE

And in the hollow thereof was found the
nest of a magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace
of pearls was inwoven."

Silenced, but not convinced, when the
story was ended, the blacksmith
Stood like a man who fain would speak,
but findeth no language;
All his thoughts were congealed into lines
on his face, as the vapours
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-
panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen
lamp on the table,
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter
tankard with home-brewed
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its
strength in the village of Grand-Pré;
While from his pocket the notary drew
his papers and inkhorn,
Wrote with a steady hand the date and
the age of the parties,

EVANGELINE

Naming the dower of the bride in flocks
of sheep and in cattle.

Orderly all things proceeded, and duly
and well were completed,

And the great seal of the law was set
like a sun on the margin.

Then from his leathern pouch the farmer
threw on the table

Three times the old man's fee in solid
pieces of silver;

And the notary rising, and blessing the
bride and the bridegroom,

Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and
drank to their welfare.

Wiping the foam from his lip, he
solemnly bowed and departed,

While in silence the others sat and
mused by the fireside,

Till Evangeline brought the draught-
board out of its corner.

Soon was the game begun. In friendly
contention the old men

Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful

EVANGELINE

manœuvre,

Laughed when a man was crowned, or
a breach was made in the king-row.

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom
of a window's embrasure,

Sat the lovers, and whispered together,
beholding the moon rise

Over the pallid sea, and the silvery mists
of the meadows.

Silently one by one, in the infinite
meadows of heaven,

Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-
me-nots of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon
the bell from the belfry

Rang out the hour of nine, the village
curfew, and straightway

Rose the guests and departed; and
silence reigned in the household.

Many a farewell word and sweet good-
night on the doorstep

Lingered long in Evangeline's heart,

EVANGELINE

and filled it with gladness.

Carefully then were covered the embers
that glowed on the hearth-stone,
And on the oaken stairs resounded the
tread of the farmer.

Soon with a soundless step the foot of
Evangeline followed.

Up the staircase moved a luminous
space in the darkness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the
shining face of the maiden.

Silent she passed the hall, and entered
the door of her chamber.

Simple that chamber was, with its
curtains of white, and its clothes-
press

Ample and high, on whose spacious
shelves were carefully folded

Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand
of Evangeline woven.

This was the precious dower she would
bring to her husband in marriage,
Better than flocks and herds, being





GASPEREAU VALLEY NEAR GRAND PRE

EVANGELINE

proofs of her skill as a housewife.
Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the
mellow and radiant moonlight
Streamed through the windows, and
lighted the room, till the heart of
the maiden
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the
tremulous tides of the ocean.
Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to
behold, as she stood with
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming
floor of her chamber!
Little she dreamed that below, among
the trees of the orchard,
Waited her lover and watched for the
gleam of her lamp and her shadow.
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at
times a feeling of sadness
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing
shade of clouds in the moonlight
Flitted across the floor and darkened the
room for a moment.
And, as she gazed from the window,

EVANGELINE

she saw serenely the moon pass
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one
star follow her footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael
wandered with Hagar!

IV

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on
the village of Grand-Pré.
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air
the Basin of Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering
shadows, were riding at anchor.
Life had long been astir in the village,
and clamorous labour
Knocked with its hundred hands at the
golden gates of the morning.
Now from the country around, from the
farms and neighbouring hamlets,
Came in their holiday dresses the blithe
Acadian peasants.

EVANGELINE

Many a glad good-morrōw and jocund
laugh from the young folk
Made the bright air brighter, as up from
the numerous meadows,

Where no path could be seen but the
track of wheels in the greensward,
Group after group appeared, and joined,
or passed on the highway.

Long ere noon, in the village all sounds
of labour were silenced.

Thronged were the streets with people;
and noisy groups at the house-doors
Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and
gossiped together.

Every house was an inn, where all were
welcomed and feasted;

For with this simple people, who lived
like brothers together,

All things were held in common, and
what one had was another's.

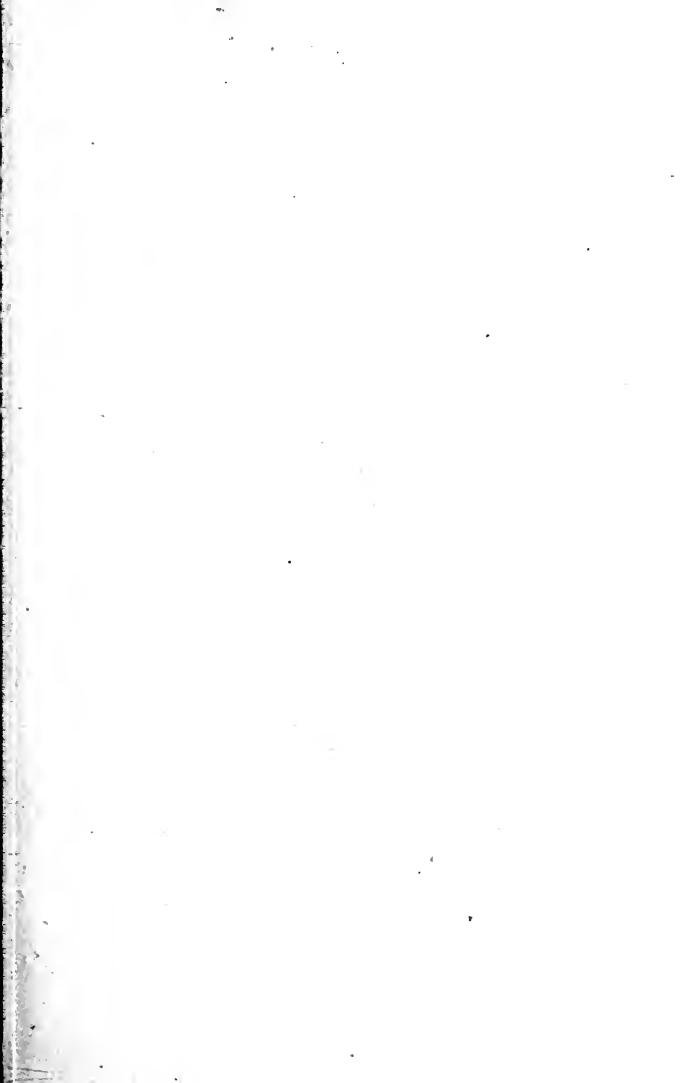
Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality
seemed more abundant:

For Evangeline stood among the guests

EVANGELINE

of her father;
Bright was her face with smiles, and
words of welcome and gladness
Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed
the cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous
air of the orchard,
Stript of its golden fruit, was spread
the feast of betrothal.
There in the shade of the porch were
the priest and the notary seated;
There good Benedict sat, and sturdy
Basil the blacksmith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the
cider-press and the beehives,
Michael the fiddler was placed, with the
gayest of hearts and of waistcoats.
Shadow and light from the leaves alter-
nately played on his snow-white
Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the
jolly face of the fiddler
Glowed like a living coal when the ashes





EVANGELINE, FROM THE PORTRAIT BY FAED

WILSON

EVANGELINE

are blown from the embers.

Gaily the old man sang to the vibrant
sound of his fiddle,

Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres and *Le
Carillon de Dunquerque.*

And anon with his wooden shoes beat
time to the music.

Merrily, merrily, whirled the wheels of
the dizzying dances

Under the orchard-trees and down the
path to the meadows;

Old folk and young together, and
children mingled among them.

Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline,
Benedict's daughter!

Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel,
son of the blacksmith!

So passed the morning away. And
lo! with a summons sonorous

Sounded the bell from its tower, and
over the meadows a drum beat.

Thronged ere long was the church with

EVANGELINE

men. Without, in the churchyard,
Waited the women. They stood by the
graves, and hung on the head-
stones

Garlands of autumn leaves and ever-
greens fresh from the forest.

Then came the guard from the ships,
and marching proudly among them
Entered the sacred portal. With loud
and dissonant clangour

Echoed the sound of their brazen drums
from ceiling and casement,—

Echoed a moment only, and slowly the
ponderous portal

Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited
the will of the soldiers.

Then uprose their commander, and spake
from the steps of the altar,

Holding aloft in his hands, with its
seals, the royal commission.

“You are convened this day,” he said,
“by his Majesty’s orders.

Clement and kind has he been; but how

EVANGELINE

you have answered his kindness,
Let your own hearts reply! To my
natural make and my temper
Painful the task is I do, which to you
I know must be grievous.
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver
the will of our monarch;
Namely, that all your lands, and dwell-
lings, and cattle of all kinds,
Forfeited be to the crown; and that you
yourselves from this province
Be transported to other lands. God
grant you may dwell there
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and
peaceable people!
Prisoners now I declare you; for such
is his Majesty's pleasure!"
As, when the air is serene in sultry
solstice of summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly
sling of the hailstones
Beats down the farmer's corn in the
field and shatters his windows,

EVANGELINE

Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground
with thatch from the house-roofs,
Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to
break their enclosures;

So on the hearts of the people descended
the words of the speaker.

Silent a moment they stood in speechless
wonder, and then rose

Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow
and anger,

And, by one impulse moved, they madly
rushed to the doorway.

Vain was the hope of escape; and cries
and fierce imprecations

Rang through the house of prayer; and
high o'er the heads of the others

Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure
of Basil the blacksmith,

As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by
the billows.

Flushed was his face and distorted with
passion; and wildly he shouted,—

“Down with the tyrants of England!

EVANGELINE

we never have sworn them allegiance!

Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes and our harvests!"

More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of a soldier

Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry contention,

Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician

Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the altar.

Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence

All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his people;

Deep were his tones and solemn; in accents measured and mournful

EVANGELINE

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum,
distinctly the clock strikes.

“What is this that ye do, my children?
what madness has seized you?

Forty years of my life have I laboured
among you, and taught you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love
one another!

Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils
and prayers and privations?

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons
of love and forgiveness?

This is the house of the Prince of Peace,
and would you profane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts
overflowing with hatred?

Lo! where the crucified Christ from
His cross is gazing upon you!

See! in those sorrowful eyes what meek-
ness and holy compassion!

Hark! how those lips still repeat the
prayer, ‘O Father, forgive them!’

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour

EVANGELINE

when the wicked assail us,
Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father,
forgive them!'"

Few were his words of rebuke, but deep
in the hearts of his people
Sank they, and sobs of contrition suc-
ceeded the passionate outbreak,
While they repeated his prayer, and said,
"O Father, forgive them!"

Then came the evening service. The
tapers gleamed from the altar.
Fervent and deep was the voice of the
priest, and the people responded,
Not with their lips alone, but their
hearts; and the Ave Maria
Sang they, and fell on their knees, and
their souls, with devotion translated,
Rose on the ardour of prayer, like Elijah
ascending to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village
the tidings of ill, and on all sides

EVANGELINE

Wandered, wailing, from house to house
the women and children.

Long at her father's door Evangeline
stood, with her right hand

Shielding her eyes from the level rays
of the sun, that, descending,

Lighted the village street with myster-
ious splendour, and roofed each

Peasant's cottage with golden thatch,
and emblazoned its windows.

Long within had been spread the snow-
white cloth on the table;

There stood the wheaten loaf, and the
honey fragrant with wild flowers;

There stood the tankard of ale, and the
cheese fresh brought from the dairy,

And, at the head of the board, the great
arm-chair of the farmer.

Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's
door, as the sunset

Threw the long shadows of trees o'er
the broad ambrosial meadows.

Ah! on her spirit within a deeper shadow

EVANGELINE

had fallen,
And from the fields of her soul a
fragrance celestial ascended,—
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and
forgiveness, and patience!
Then, all-forgetful of self, she wandered
into the village,
Cheering with looks and words the
mournful hearts of the women,
As o'er the darkening fields with linger-
ing steps they departed,
Urged by their household cares, and the
weary feet of their children.
Down sank the great red sun, and in
golden, glimmering vapours
Veiled the light of his face, like the
Prophet descending from Sinai.
Sweetly over the village the bell of the
Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the
church Evangeline lingered.
All was silent within; and in vain at

EVANGELINE

the door and the windows
Stood she, and listened and looked, till,
overcome by emotion,
“Gabriel!” cried she aloud with tremu-
lous voice; but no answer
Came from the graves of the dead, nor
the gloomier grave of the living.
Slowly at length she returned to the
tenantless house of her father.
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on
the board was the supper untasted,
Empty and drear was each room, and
haunted with phantoms of terror.
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and
the floor of her chamber.
In the dead of the night she heard the
disconsolate rain fall
Loud on the withered leaves of the
sycamore-tree by the window.
Keenly the lightning flashed; and the
voice of the echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and
governed the world He created!

EVANGELINE

Then she remembered the tale she had
heard of the justice of Heaven;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she
peacefully slumbered till morning.

v

Four times the sun had risen and set;
and now on the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping
maids of the farm-house.
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and
mournful procession,
Came from the neighbouring hamlets
and farms the Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their house-
hold goods to the seashore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once
more on their dwellings,
Ere they were shut from sight by the
winding road and the woodland.

EVANGELINE

Close at their sides their children ran,
and urged on the oxen,
While in their little hands they clasped
some fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they
hurried; and there on the sea-beach
Piled in confusion lay the household
goods of the peasants.

All day long between the shore and the
ships did the boats ply;

All day long the wains came labouring
down from the village.

Late in the afternoon, when the sun
was near to his setting,

Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll
of drums from the churchyard.

Thither the women and children thronged.
On a sudden the church doors

Opened, and forth came the guard, and
marching in gloomy procession

Followed the long imprisoned, but
patient, Acadian farmers.

EVANGELINE

Even as pilgrims, who journey afar
from their homes and their country,
Sing as they go, and in singing forget
they are weary and way-worn,
So with songs on their lips the Acadian
peasants descended

Down from the church to the shore, amid
their wives and their daughters.

Foremost the young men came; and,
raising together their voices,

Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the
Catholic Missions:—

“Sacred heart of the Saviour! O
inexhaustible fountain!

Fill our hearts this day with strength
and submission and patience!”

Then the old men, as they marched,
and the women that stood by the
wayside,

Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds
in the sunshine above them

Mingled their notes therewith, like voices
of spirits departed.

EVANGELINE

Half - way down to the shore
Evangeline waited in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong
in the hour of affliction,—
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the
procession approached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale
with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly
running to meet him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head
on his shoulder, and whispered,—
“Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we
love one another,
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, what-
ever mischances may happen!”
Smiling she spake these words; then
suddenly paused, for her father
Saw she slowly advancing. Alas! how
changed was his aspect!
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and
the fire from his eye, and his footstep
Heavier seemed with the weight of the

EVANGELINE

heavy heart in his bosom.
But, with a smile and a sigh, she clasped
his neck and embraced him,
Speaking words of endearment where
words of comfort availed not.
Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved
on that mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the
tumult and stir of embarking.
Busily plied the freighted boats; and in
the confusion
Wives were torn from their husbands, and
mothers, too late, saw their children
Left on the land, extending their arms,
with wildest entreaties.
So unto separate ships were Basil and
Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline
stood with her father.]
Half the task was not done when the sun
went down, and the twilight
Deepened and darkened around; and in

E V A N G E L I N E

haste the refluent ocean
Fled away from the shore, and left the
line of the sand-beach
Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp
and the slippery sea-weed.
Farther back in the midst of the house-
hold goods and the wagons,
Like to a gipsy camp, or a leaguer after
a battle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the
sentinels near them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless
Acadian farmers.
Back to its nethermost caves retreated
the bellowing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling
pebbles, and leaving
Inland and far up the shore the stranded
boats of the sailors.
Then, as the night descended, the herds
returned from their pastures;
Sweet was the moist still air with the
odour of milk from their udders;

EVANGELINE

Lowing they waited, and long, at the
well-known bars of the farmyard,—
Waited and looked in vain for the voice
and the hand of the milkmaid.

Silence reigned in the streets; from the
church no Angelus sounded,
Rose no smoke from the roofs, and
gleamed no lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the
evening fires had been kindled,
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the
sands from wrecks in the tempest.
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrow-
ful faces were gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of
men, and the crying of children.
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth
to hearth in his parish.
Wandered the faithful priest, consoling
and blessing and cheering,
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's
desolate seashore.

EVANGELINE

Thus he approached the place where
Evangeline sat with her father,
And in the flickering light beheld the
face of the old man,
Haggard and hollow and wan, and
without either thought or emotion,
E'en as the face of a clock from which
the hands have been taken.

Vainly Evangeline strove with words
and caresses to cheer him,
Vainly offered him food; yet he moved
not, he looked not, he spake not,
But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at
the flickering firelight.

“*Benedicite!*” murmured the priest, in
tones of compassion.

More he fain would have said, but his
heart was full, and his accents
Faltered and paused on his lips, as the
feet of a child on a threshold,
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and
the awful presence of sorrow.

Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on

EVANGELINE

the head of the maiden;
Raising his tearful eyes to the silent
stars that above them
Moved on their way, unperturbed by the
wrongs and sorrows of mortals.
Then sat he down at her side, and they
wept together in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light
as in autumn the blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven,
and o'er the horizon
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands
upon the mountain and meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and
piling huge shadows together.
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on
the roofs of the village,
Gleamed on the sky and sea, and the
ships that lay in the road-stead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and
flashes of flame were
Thrust through their folds and with-

E V A N G E L I N E

drawn, like the quivering hands of
a martyr.

Then as the wind seized the gleeds
and the burning thatch, and, up-
lifting,

Whirled them aloft through the air, at
once from a hundred house-tops
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of
flame intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the
crowd on the shore and on ship-
board.

Speechless at first they stood, then cried
aloud in their anguish,

“We shall behold no more our homes
in the village of Grand-Pé!”

Loud on a sudden the cocks began to
crow in the farm-yards,

Thinking the day had dawned; and anon
the lowing of cattle

Came on the evening breeze, by the
barking of dogs interrupted.

EVANGELINE

Then rose a sound of dread, such as
startles the sleeping encampments
Far in the western prairies or forests
that skirt the Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep
by with the speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes
rush to the river.

Such was the sound that arose on the
night, as the herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences,
and madly rushed o'er the meadows.

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet
speechless, the priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened
and widened before them;
And they turned at length to speak
to their silent companion,
Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and
stretched abroad on the seashore
Motionless lay his form, from which the
soul had departed.

E V A N G E L I N E

Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless
head, and the maiden
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed
aloud in her terror.

Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with
her head on his bosom.

Through the long night she lay in deep,
oblivious slumber;

And when she awoke from the trance,
she beheld a multitude near her.

Faces of friends she beheld, that were
mournfully gazing upon her;

Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of
saddest compassion.

Still the blaze of the burning village
illumined the landscape,

Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed
on the faces around her,

And like the day of doom it seemed to
her wavering senses.

Then a familiar voice she heard, as it
said to the people,—

“Let us bury him here by the sea.

EVANGELINE

When a happier season
Brings us again to our home from the
unknown land of our exile,
Then shall his sacred dust be piously
laid in the churchyard.”
Such were the words of the priest. And
there in haste by the seaside,
Having the glare of the burning village
for funeral torches,
But without bell or book, they buried
the farmer of Grand-Pé
And as the voice of the priest repeated
the service of sorrow,
Lo! with a mournful sound, like the
voice of a vast congregation,
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled
its roar with the dirges.
'Twas the returning tide, that afar from
the waste of the ocean,
With the first dawn of the day, came
heaving and hurrying landward.
Then recommenced once more the stir
and noise of embarking;

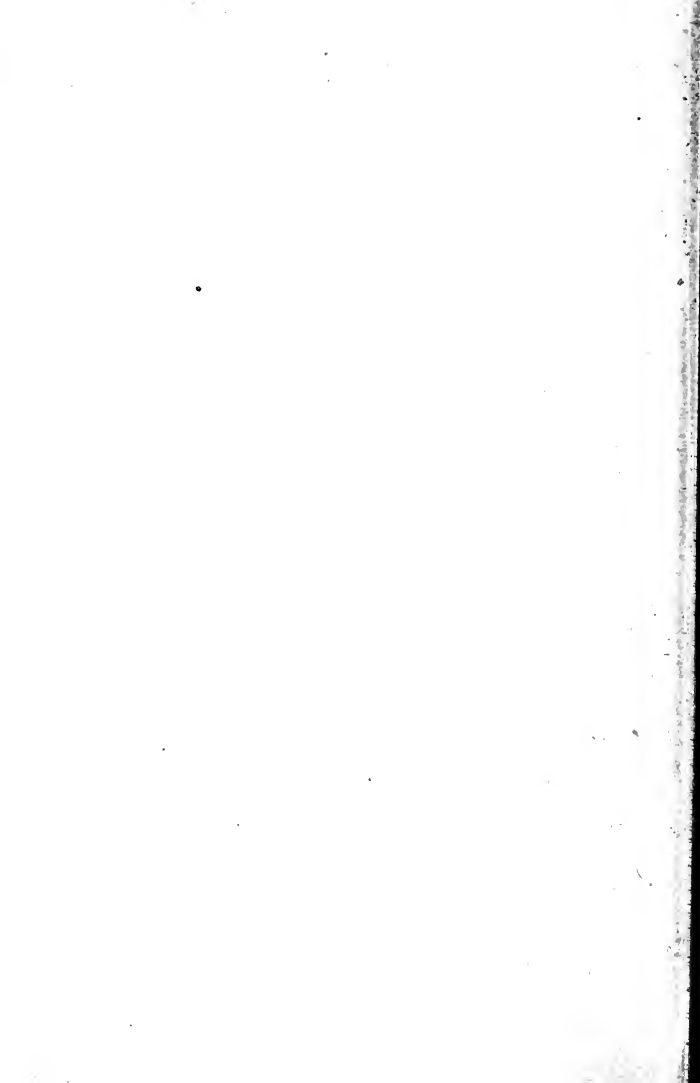
EVANGELINE

And with the ebb of the tide the ships
sailed out of the harbour,
Leaving behind them the dead on the
shore, and the village in ruins.



CORNWALLIS INN, KENTVILLE

Photo C.P.R.



PART THE SECOND

I

MANY a weary year had passed since
the burning of Grand-Pré,
When on the falling tide the freighted
vessels departed,
Bearing a nation, with all its household
gods, into exile,
Exile without an end, and without an
example in story.
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the
Acadians landed;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow,
when the wind from the north-east
Strikes aslant through the fogs that
darken the Banks of Newfoundland.
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wan-
dered from city to city,

EVANGELINE

From the cold lakes of the North to
sultry Southern savannas,—
From the bleak shores of the sea to the
lands where the Father of Waters
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags
them down to the ocean,
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered
bones of the mammoth.
Friends they sought and homes; and
many, despairing, heart-broken,
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no
longer a friend nor a fireside.
Written their history stands on tablets of
stone in the churchyards. }
Long among them was seen a maiden
who waited and wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently
suffering all things.
Fair was she and young: but, alas!
before her extended,
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of
life, with its pathway
Marked by the graves of those who had

EVANGELINE

sorrowed and suffered before her,
Passions long extinguished, and hopes
long dead and abandoned,
As the emigrant's way o'er the Western
desert is marked by
Camp-fires long consumed, and bones
that bleach in the sunshine.
Something there was in her life in-
complete, imperfect, unfinished;
As if a morning of June, with all its music
and sunshine,
Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading
slowly descended
Into the east again, from whence it late
had arisen.
Sometimes she lingered in towns, till
urged by the fever within her,
Urged by a restless longing, the hunger
and thirst of the spirit,
She would commence again her endless
search and endeavour;
Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and
gazed on the crosses and tombstones,

EVANGELINE

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought
that perhaps in its bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed
to slumber beside him.

Sometimes a rumour, a hearsay, an
inarticulate whisper,

Came with its airy hand to point and
beckon her forward.

Sometimes she spake with those who had
seen her beloved and known him,

But it was long ago, in some far-off place
or forgotten.

“Gabriel Lajeunesse!” they said; “Oh,
yes! we have seen him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and
both have gone to the prairies;

Coueurs-des-Bois are they, and famous
hunters and trappers.”

“Gabriel Lajeunesse!” said others; “Oh,
yes! we have seen him.

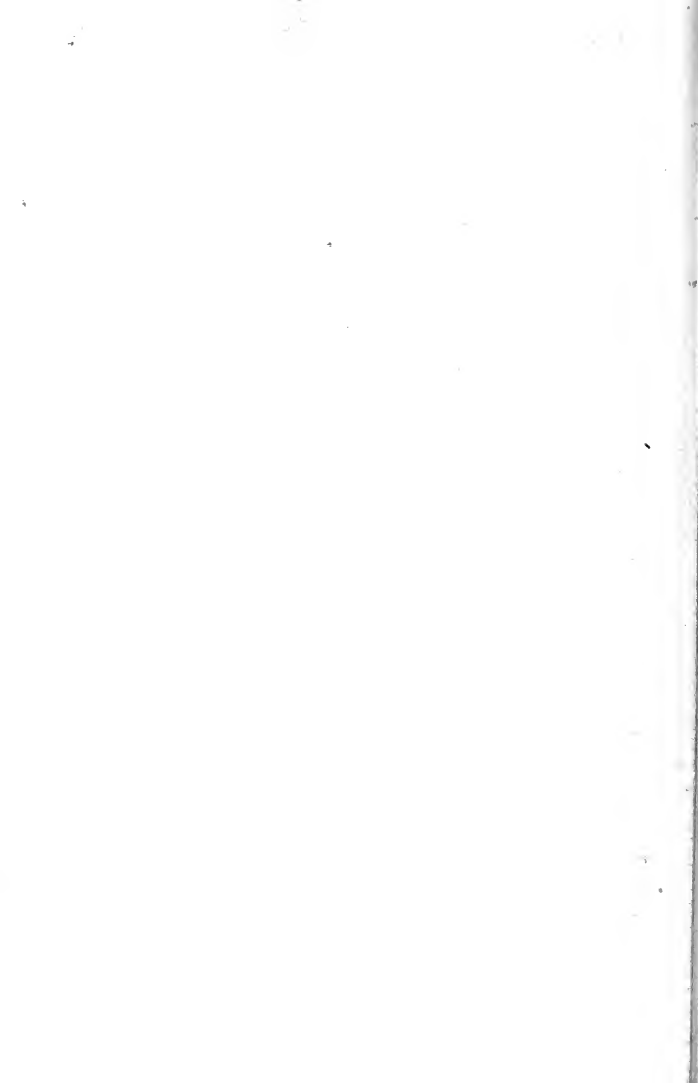
He is a Voyageur in the lowlands of
Louisiana.”

Then would they say,—“Dear child! why



INTERIOR MEMORIAL CHURCH, GRAND PRÉ

P.R.



EVANGELINE

dream and wait for him longer?

Are there not other youths as fair as
Gabriel? others

Who have hearts as tender and true, and
spirits as loyal?

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's
son, who has loved thee

Many a tedious year; come, give him
thy hand and be happy!

Thou art too fair to be left to braid
St. Catherine's tresses."

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely
but sadly,—“I cannot!

Whither my heart has gone, there follows
my hand, and not elsewhere.

For when the heart goes before, like a
lamp, and illumines the pathway,
Many things are made clear, that else lie
hidden in darkness."

Thereupon the priest, her friend and
father-confessor,

Said, with a smile,—“O daughter! thy
God thus speaketh within thee!

EVANGELINE

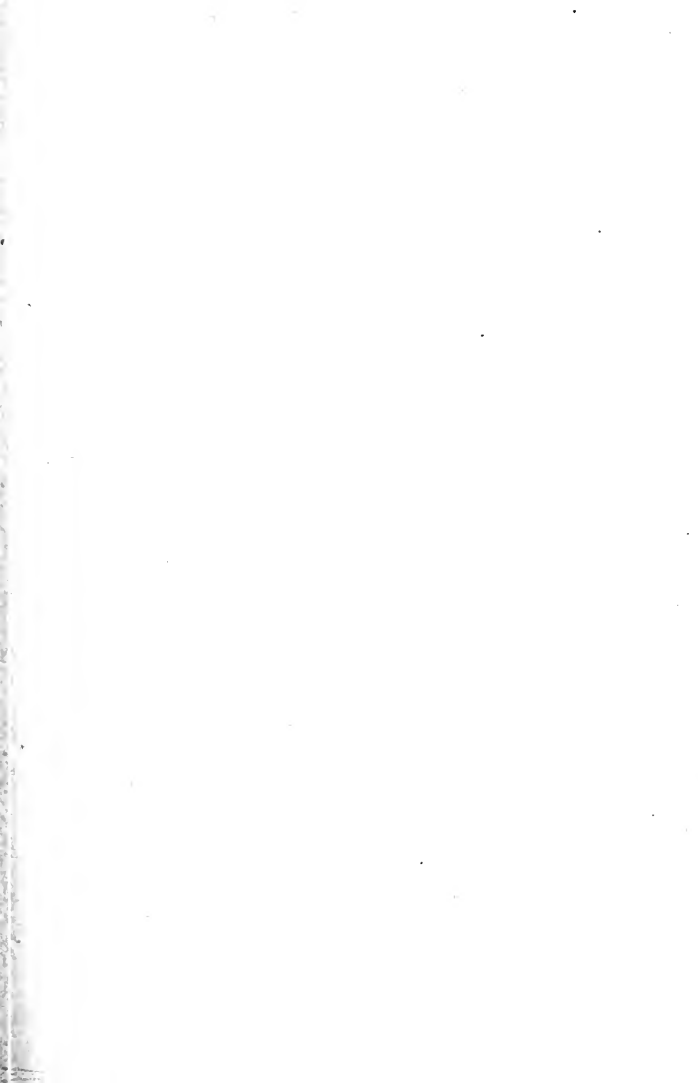
Talk not of wasted affection, affection
never was wasted;
If it enrich not the heart of another, its
waters, returning
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall
fill them full of refreshment;
That which the fountain sends forth
returns again to the fountain.
Patience; accomplish thy labour; accom-
plish thy work of affection!
Sorrow and silence are strong, and
patient endurance is godlike.
Therefore accomplish thy labour of love,
till the heart is made godlike,
Purified, strengthened, perfected, and ren-
dered more worthy of heaven!"
Cheered by the good man's words, Evan-
geline laboured and waited.
Still in her heart she heard the funeral
dirge of the ocean,
But with its sound there was mingled a
voice that whispered, "Despair not!"
Thus did that poor soul wander in want

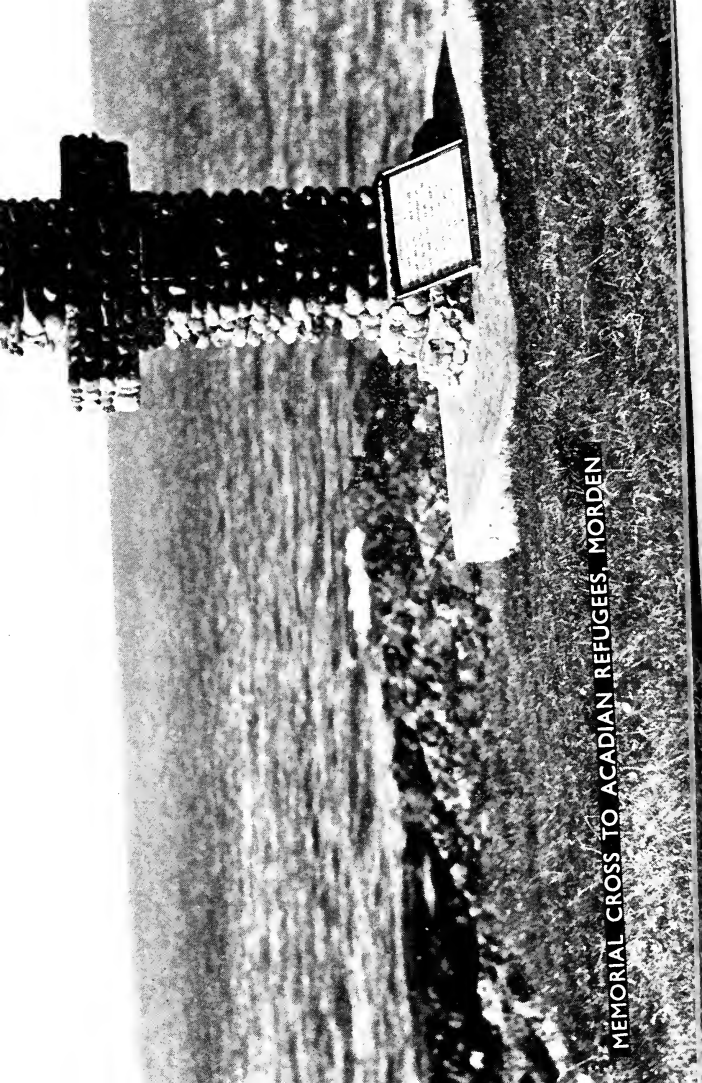
EVANGELINE

and cheerless discomfort,
Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and
thorns of existence.
Let me essay, O Muse! to follow the
wanderer's footsteps;—
Not through each devious path, each
changeful year of existence,
But as a traveller follows a streamlet's
course through the valley:
Far from its margin at times, and seeing
the gleam of its water
Here and there, in some open space, and
at intervals only;
Then drawing nearer its banks, through
sylvan glooms that conceal it,
Though he behold it not, he can hear its
continuous murmur;
Happy, at length, if he find the spot
where it reaches an outlet.

II

It was the month of May. Far down the
Beautiful River,
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth
of the Wabash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and
swift Mississippi,
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed
by Acadian boatmen.
It was a band of exiles: a raft, as it were,
from the shipwrecked
Nation, scattered along the coast, now
floating together,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief
and a common misfortune;
Men and women and children, who,
guided by hope or by hearsay,
Sought for their kith and their kin
among the few-acred farmers
On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of
fair Opelousas.





MEMORIAL CROSS TO ACADIAN REFUGEES, MORDEN

EVANGELINE

With them Evangeline went, and her
guide, the Father Felican.
Onward o'er sunken sands, through a
wilderness sombre with forests,
Day after day they glided adown the
turbulent river;
Night after night, by their blazing fires,
encamped on its borders.
Now through rushing chutes, among
green islands, where plumelike
Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests,
they swept with the current,
Then emerged into broad lagoons, where
silvery sand-bars
Lay in the stream, and along the wimp-
ling waves of their margin,
Shining with snow-white plumes, large
flocks of pelicans waded.
Level the landscape grew, and along the
shores of the river
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of
luxuriant gardens,
Stood the houses of planters, with negro-

E V A N G E L I N E

cabins and dove-cots.

They were approaching the region where
reigns perpetual summer,

Where through the Golden Coast, and
groves of orange and citron,

Sweeps with majestic curve the river
away to the eastward.

They, too, swerved from their course;
and, entering the Bayou of Plaque-
mine,

Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and
devious waters,

Which, like a network of steel, extended
in every direction.

Over their heads the towering and tene-
brous boughs of the cypress

Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses
in mid-air

Waved like banners that hang on the
walls of ancient cathedrals.

Deathlike the silence seemed, and un-
broken, save by the herons

Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees

EVANGELINE

returning at sunset,
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon
with demoniac laughter.
Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced
and gleamed on the water,
Gleamed on the columns of cypress and
cedar sustaining the arches,
Down through whose broken vaults it fell
as through chinks in a ruin.
Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange
were all things around them;
And o'er their spirits there came a feeling
of wonder and sadness,—
Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and
that cannot be compassed.
As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the
turf of the prairies,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the
shrinking mimosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad
forebodings of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the
stroke of doom has attained it.

E V A N G E L I N E

But Evangeline's heart was sustained by
a vision, that faintly
Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her
on through the moonlight.
It was the thought of her brain that
assumed the shape of a phantom.
Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel
wandered before her,
And every stroke of the oar now brought
him nearer and nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the
boat, rose one of the oarsmen,
And, as a signal sound, if others like them
peradventure
Sailed on those gloomy and midnight
streams, blew a blast on his bugle.
Wild through the dark colonnades and
corridors leafy the blast rang,
Breaking the seal of silence, and giving
tongues to the forest.
Soundless above them the banners of
moss just stirred to the music.

EVANGELINE

Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in
the distance.

Over the watery floor, and beneath the
reverberant branches;

But not a voice replied; no answer came
from the darkness;

And when the echoes had ceased, like a
sense of pain was the silence.

Then Evangeline slept; but the boatmen
rowed through the midnight,

Silent at times, then singing familiar
Canadian boat-songs,

Such as they sang of old on their own
Acadian rivers,

While through the night were heard the
mysterious sounds of the desert,

Far off,—indistinct,—as of wave or wind
in the forest,

Mixed with the whoop of the crane and
the roar of the grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged
from the shades; and before them

EVANGELINE

Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the
Atchafalaya.

Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the
slight undulations

Made by the passing oars, and, resplen-
dent in beauty, the lotus

Lifted her golden crown above the heads
of the boatmen.

Faint was the air with the odorous
breath of magnolia blossoms,

And with the heat of noon; and number-
less sylvan islands,

Fragrant and thickly embowered with
blossoming hedges of roses,

Near to whose shores they glided along,
invited to slumber.

Soon by the fairest of these their weary
oars were suspended.

Under the boughs of Wachita willows,
that grew by the margin,

Safely their boat was moored; and
scattered about on the greensward,

Tired with their midnight toil, the

EVANGELINE

weary travellers slumbered.
Over them vast and high extended the
 cope of a cedar.
Swinging from its great arms, the
 trumpet-flower and the grape-vine
Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the
 ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels
 ascending, descending,
Were the swift humming-birds, that
 flitted from blossom to blossom.
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as
 she slumbered beneath it.
Filled was her heart with love, and the
 dawn of an opening heaven
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory
 of regions celestial.

Nearer, and ever nearer, among the
 numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away
 o'er the water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms

E V A N G E L I N E

of hunters and trappers.

Northward its prow was turned to the
land of the bison and beaver.

At the helm sat a youth, with counten-
ance thoughtful and care-worn.

Dark and neglected locks overshadowed
his brow, and a sadness

Somewhat beyond his years on his face
was legibly written.

Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting,
unhappy and restless,

Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of
self and of sorrow.

Swiftly they glided along, close under the
lee of the island,

But by the opposite bank, and behind a
screen of palmettos,

So that they saw not the boat, where it
lay concealed in the willows;

All undisturbed by the dash of their oars,
and unseen, were the sleepers.

Angel of God was there none to awaken
the slumbering maiden.

EVANGELINE

Swiftly they glided away, like the shade
of a cloud on the prairie.

After the sound of their oars on the
tholes had died in the distance,

As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke
and the maiden

Said with a sigh to the friendly priest,
“O Father Felican!

Something says in my heart that near
me Gabriel wanders.

Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague
superstition?

Or has an angel passed and revealed the
truth to my spirit?”

Then, with a blush, she added,—“Alas
for my credulous fancy!

Unto ears like thine such words as these
have no meaning.”

But made answer the reverend man, and
he smiled as he answered,—

“Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor
are they to me without meaning.

Feeling is deep and still; and the word

EVANGELINE

that floats on the surface
Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where
the anchor is hidden.
Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what
the world calls illusions.
Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far
away to the southward,
On the banks of the Têche are the towns
of St. Maur and St. Martin.
There the long-wandering bride shall be
given again to her bridegroom,
There the long-absent pastor regain his
flock and his sheepfold.
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies
and forests of fruit-trees
Under the feet a garden of flowers, and
the bluest of heavens
Bending above, and resting its dome on
the walls of the forest.
They who dwell there have named it the
Eden of Louisiana.”

With these words of cheer they arose

EVANGELINE

and continued their journey.
Softly the evening came. The sun from
the western horizon
Like a magician extended his golden
wand o'er the landscape;
Twinkling vapours arose; and sky and
water and forest
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and
melted and mingled together.
Hanging between two skies, a cloud with
edges of silver,
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars,
on the motionless water.
Filled was Evangeline's heart with in-
expressible sweetness.
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred
fountains of feeling
Glowed with the light of love, as the skies
and waters around her.
Then, from a neighbouring thicket the
mocking-bird, wildest of singers,
Swinging aloft on a willow spray that
hung o'er the water,

EVANGELINE

Shook from his little throat such floods
of delirious music,
That the whole air and the woods and the
waves seemed silent to listen.
Plaintive at first were the tones and sad:
then soaring to madness
Seemed they to follow or guide the revel
of frenzied Bacchantes.
Single notes were then heard, in sorrow-
ful, low lamentation;
Till, having gathered them all, he flung
them abroad in derision,
As when, after a storm, a gust of wind
through the tree-tops
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal
shower on the branches.
With such a prelude as this, and hearts
that throbbed with emotion,
Slowly they entered the Tête, where it
flows through the green Opelousas,
And through the amber air, above the
crest of the woodland,
Saw the column of smoke that arose

E V A N G E L I N E

from a neighbouring dwelling;—
Sounds of a horn they heard, and the
distant lowing of cattle.

III

Near to the bank of the river, o'er-
shadowed by oaks, from whose
branches
Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic
mistletoe flaunted,
Such as the Druids cut down with golden
hatchets at Yule-tide,
Stood, secluded and still, the house of the
herdsman. A garden
Girded it round about with a belt of lux-
uriant blossoms,
Filling the air with fragrance. The house
itself was of timbers
Hewn from the cypress-tree, and care-
fully fitted together.
Large and low was the roof; and on

EVANGELINE

slender columns supported,
Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad
and spacious veranda,
Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee,
extended around it.

At each end of the house, amid the
flowers of the garden,
Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's
perpetual symbol,
Scenes of endless wooing, and endless
contentions of rivals.

Silence reigned o'er the place. The line
of shadow and sunshine
Ran near the tops of the trees; but the
house itself was in shadow,
And from its chimney-top, ascending and
slowly expanding
Into the evening air, a thin blue column
of smoke rose.

In the rear of the house, from the garden
gate, ran a pathway
Through the great groves of oak to the
skirts of the limitless prairie,

EVANGELINE

Into whose sea of flowers the sun was
slowly descending.
Full in his track of light, like ships with
shadowy canvas
Hanging loose from their spars in a
motionless calm in the tropics,
Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled
cordage of grape-vines.

Just where the woodlands met the
flowery surf of the prairie,
Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish
saddle and stirrups,
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and
doublet of deerskin.
Broad and brown was the face that from
under the Spanish sombrero
Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the
lordly look of its master.
Round about him were numberless herds
of kine, that were grazing
Quietly in the meadows, and breathing
the vapoury freshness

EVANGELINE

That uprose from the river and spread
itself over the landscape.
Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his
side, and expanding
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a
blast, that resounded
Wildly and sweet and far, through the
still damp air of the evening.
Suddenly out of the grass the long white
horns of the cattle
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse
currents of ocean.
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellow-
ing rushed o'er the prairie,
And the whole mass became a cloud, a
shade in the distance.
Then, as the herdsman turned to the
house, through the gate of the
garden
Saw he the forms of the priest and the
maiden advancing to meet him.
Suddenly down from his horse he sprang
in amazement, and forward

EVANGELINE

Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder;
When they beheld his face, they recognised Basil the blacksmith.
Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden.
There in an arbour of roses with endless question and answer
Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly embraces,
Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and thoughtful.
Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now dark doubts and misgivings
Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, somewhat embarrassed,
Broke the silence and said,—“If you came by the Atchafalaya,
How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the bayous?”
Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed.
Tears came into her eyes, and she said,

EVANGELINE

with a tremulous accent,—
“Gone? is Gabriel gone?” and, concealing
her face on his shoulder,
All her o’erburdened heart gave way, and
she wept and lamented.
Then the good Basil said,—and his voice
grew blithe as he said it,—
“Be of good cheer, my child; it is only
to-day he departed.
Foolish boy! he has left me alone with
my herds and my horses.
Moody and restless grown, and tried and
troubled, his spirit
Could no longer endure the calm of this
quiet existence,
Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and
sorrowful ever,
Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and
his troubles,
He at length had become so tedious to
men and to maidens,
Tedious even to me, that at length I
bethought me, and sent him

EVANGELINE

Unto the town of Adayes to trade for
mules with the Spaniards.

Thence he will follow the Indian trails
to the Ozark Mountains,

Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers
trapping the beaver.

Therefore be of good cheer; we will
follow the fugitive lover;

He is not far on his way, and the Fates
and the streams are against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through
the red dew of the morning

We will follow him fast, and bring him
back to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up
from the banks of the river,

Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came
Michael the fiddler.

Long under Basil's roof had he lived like
a god on Olympus,

Having no other care than dispensing
music to mortals.

EVANGELINE

Far renowned was he for his silver locks
and his fiddle.

“Long live Michael,” they cried, “our
brave Acadian minstrel!”

As they bore him aloft in triumphal pro-
cession; and straightway

Father Felican advanced with Evangeline,
greeting the old man

Kindly and oft, and recalling the past,
while Basil, enraptured,

Hailed with hilarious joy his old com-
panions and gossips,

Laughing loud and long, and embracing
mothers and daughters.

Much they marvelled to see the wealth
of the ci-devant blacksmith,

All his domains and his herds, and his
patriarchal demeanour;

Much they marvelled to hear his tales of
the soil and the climate,

And of the prairies, whose numberless
herds were his who would take them;

Each one thought in his heart, that he, too

EVANGELINE

would go and do likewise.

Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing
the breezy veranda,
Entered the hall of the house, where
already the supper of Basil
Waited his late return; and they rested
and feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.
All was silent without, and, illumining
the landscape with silver,
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad
stars; but within doors,
Brighter than these, shone the faces of
friends in the glimmering lamplight.
Then from his station aloft, at the head
of the table, the herdsman
Poured forth his heart and his wine
together in endless profusion.
Lighting his pipe, that was filled with
sweet Natchitoches tobacco,
Thus he spake to his guests, who listened,

E V A N G E L I N E

and smiled as they listened:—

“Welcome once more, my friends, who
long have been friendless and home-
less,

Welcome once more to a home, that is
better perchance than the old one!

Here no hungry winter congeals our
blood like the rivers;

Here no stony ground provokes the
wrath of the farmer.

Smoothly the ploughshare runs through
the soil, as a keel through the water.

All the year round the orange-groves are
in blossom; and the grass grows

More in a single night than a whole
Canadian summer.

Here, too, numberless herds run wild and
unclaimed in the prairies;

Here, too, lands may be had for the ask-
ing, and forests of timber

With a few blows of the axe are hewn and
framed into houses.

After your houses are built, and your

EVANGELINE

fields are yellow with harvests,
No King George of England shall drive
you away from your homesteads,
Burning your dwellings and barns, and
stealing your farms and cattle.”

Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful
cloud from his nostrils,

While his huge, brown hand came thundering
down on the table,

So that the guests all started; and Father
Felican, astounded,

Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff
half-way to his nostrils.

But the brave Basil resumed, and his
words were milder and gayer:—

“Only beware of the fever, my friends,
beware of the fever!

For it is not like that of our cold Acadian
climate,

Cured by wearing a spider hung round
one's neck in a nutshell!”

Then there were voices heard at the door,
and footsteps approaching

EVANGELINE

Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of
the breezy veranda.

It was the neighbouring Creoles and
small Acadian planters,

Who had been summoned all to the house
of Basil the Herdsman.

Merry the meeting was of ancient com-
rades and neighbours:

Friend clasped friend in his arms; and
they who before were as strangers,

Meeting in exile, became straightway as
friends to each other,

Drawn by the gentle bond of a common
country together.

But in the neighbouring hall a strain of
music, proceeding

From the accordant strings of Michael's
melodious fiddle,

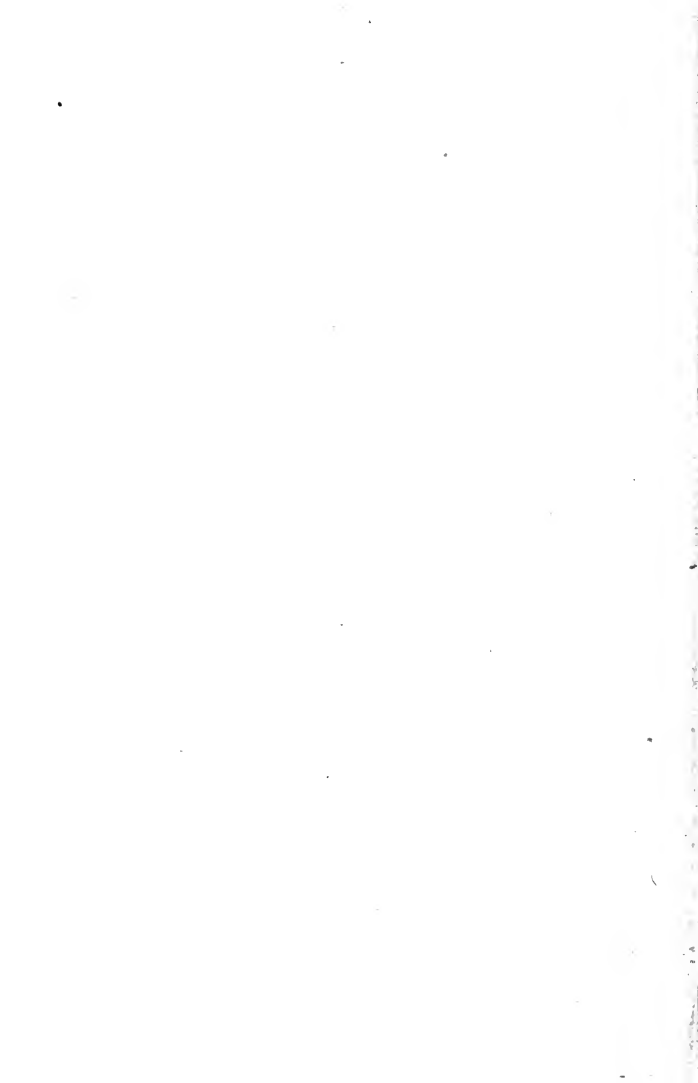
Broke up all further speech. Away, like
children delighted,

All things forgotten beside, they gave
themselves to the maddening

Whirl of the giddy dance, as it swept and



FORTE ANNE (FORMERLY PORT ROYAL) ANNAPOLIS



EVANGELINE

swayed to the music,
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the
rush of fluttering garments.

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the
hall, the priest and the herdsman
Sat, conversing together of past and
present and future;
While Evangeline stood like one entranced
for within her
Olden memories rose, and loud in the
midst of the music
Heard she the sound of the sea, and an
irrepressible sadness
Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole
forth into the garden.
Beautiful was the night. Behind the
black wall of the forest,
Tipping its summit with silver, arose
the moon. On the river
Fell here and there through the branches
a tremulous gleam of the moonlight,
Like the sweet thoughts of love on a

EVANGELINE

darkened and devious spirit.
Nearer and round about her, the manifold
flowers of the garden
Poured out their souls in odours, that
were their prayers and confessions
Unto the night, as it went its way, like
a silent Carthusian.
Fuller of fragrance than they, and as
heavy with shadows and night-dews,
Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm
and the magical moonlight
Seemed to inundate her soul with in-
definable longings,
As, through the garden-gate, and be-
neath the shade of the oak-trees,
Passed she along the path to the edge of
the measureless prairie.
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it,
and fire-flies
Gleamed and floated away in mingled and
infinite numbers.
Over her head the stars, the thoughts of
God in the heavens,

EVANGELINE

Shone on the eyes of man, who had
 ceased to marvel and worship,
Save when a blazing comet was seen on
 the walls of that temple,
As if a hand had appeared and written
 upon them, "Upharsin."
And the soul of the maiden, between the
 stars and the fire-flies,
Wandered alone and she cried,—“O,
 Gabriel! O my beloved!
Art thou so near unto me, and yet I
 cannot behold thee?
Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy
 voice does not reach me?
Ah! how often thy feet have trod this
 path to the prairie!
Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on
 the woodlands around me!
Ah! how often beneath this oak, return-
 ing from labour,
Thou hast lain down to rest, and to
 dream of me in thy slumbers!
When shall these eyes behold, these

EVANGELINE

arms be folded about thee?"

Loud and sudden and near the notes of a
whippoorwill sounded

Like a flute in the woods; and anon,
through the neighbouring thickets,
Farther and farther away it floated and
dropped into silence.

"Patience!" whispered the oaks from
oracular caverns of darkness:

And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh
responded, "To-morrow!"

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the
flowers of the garden

Bathed his shining feet with their tears,
and anointed his tresses

With the delicious balm that they bore
in their vases of crystal.

"Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood
at the shadowy threshold;

"See that you bring us the Prodigal Son
from his fasting and famine;

And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept

EVANGELINE

when the bridegroom was coming ”
“Farewell!” answered the maiden, and,
smiling, with Basil descended
Down to the river’s brink, where the boat-
men already were waiting.

Thus beginning their journey with morn-
ing, and sunshine, and with gladness,
Swiftly they followed the flight of him
who was speeding before them,
Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf
over the desert.

Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the
day that succeeded,

Found they the trace of his course, in
lake or forest or river,

Nor, after many days, had they found
him; but vague and uncertain

Rumours alone were their guides through
a wild and desolate country;

Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town
of Adayes,

Weary and worn, they alighted, and
learned from the garrulous landlord,

EVANGELINE

That on the day before, with horses and
guides and companions,
Gabriel left the village, and took the road
of the prairies.

IV

Far in the West there lies a desert land,
where the mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their
lofty and luminous summits.
Down from their jagged, deep ravines,
where the gorge, like a gateway,
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the
emigrant's wagon,
Westward the Oregon flows and the
Walleway and Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among
the Wind-river Mountains,
Through the Sweet-water Valley pre-
cipitate leaps the Nebraska;
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-
bout and the Spanish sierras,

EVANGELINE

Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept
by the wind of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound,
descend to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud
and solemn vibrations.
Spreading between these streams are the
wondrous, beautiful prairies;
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in
shadow and sunshine,
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses
and purple amorphas.
Over them wandered the buffalo herds,
and the elk and the roebuck;
Over them wandered the wolves, and
herds of riderless horses;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds
that are weary with travel;
Over them wander the scattered tribes of
Ishmael's children,
Staining the desert with blood; and
above their terrible war-trails
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic,

E V A N G E L I N E

the vulture,
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain
slaughtered in battle,
By invisible stairs ascending and scaling
the heavens.
Here and there rise smokes from the
camps of these savage marauders;
Here and there rise grooves from the
margins of swift-running rivers;
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchor-
ite monk of the desert,
Climbs down their dark ravines to dig
for roots by the brookside;
And over all is the sky, the clear and
crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted
above them.

Into this wonderful land, at the base of
the Ozark Mountains,
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and
trappers behind him.
Day after day, with their Indian guides,

E V A N G E L I N E

the maiden and Basil
Followed his flying steps, and thought
each day to o'ertake him.
Sometimes they saw, or thought they
saw, the smoke of his camp-fire
Rise in the morning air from the distant
plain; but at nightfall,
When they had reached the place, they
found only embers and ashes.
And, though their hearts were sad at
times and their bodies were weary,
Hope still guided them on, as the magic
Fata Morgana
Showed them her lakes of light, that
retreated and vanished before them.

Once, as they sat by their evening fire,
there silently entered
Into their little camp an Indian woman,
whose features
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience
as great as her sorrow.
She was a Shawnee woman returning

EVANGELINE

home to her people,
From the far-off hunting-grounds of the
cruel Camanches,
Where her Canadian husband, a Coureur-
des-Bois, had been murdered.
Touched were their hearts at her story,
and warmest and friendliest welcome
Gave they, with words of cheer, and she
sat and feasted among them
On the buffalo-meat and the venison
cooked on the embers.
But when their meal was done, and Basil
and all his companions,
Worn with the long day's march and the
chase of the deer and the bison,
Stretched themselves on the ground, and
slept where the quivering fire-light
Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their
forms wrapped up in their blankets,
Then at the door of Evangeline's tent
she sat and repeated
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the
charm of her Indian accent,





ROYAL ACADIAN ROOM, ANNAPOLIS

EVANGELINE

All the tale of her love, with its pleasures,
and pains, and reverses.

Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and
to know that another

Hapless heart like her own had loved and
had been disappointed.

Moved to the depths of her soul by pity
and woman's compassion,

Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who
had suffered was near her,

She in turn related her love and all its
disasters.

Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and
when she had ended

Still was mute; but at length, as if a
mysterious horror

Passed through her brain, she spake, and
repeated the tale of the Mowis;

Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who
won and wedded a maiden,

But, when the morning came, arose and
passed from the wigwam,

Fading and melting away and dissolving

EVANGELINE

into the sunshine,
Till she beheld him no more, though she
followed far into the forest.
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that
seemed like a weird incantation,
Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who
was wooed by a phantom,
That, through the pines o'er her father's
lodge, in the hush of the twilight,
Breathed like the evening wind, and
whispered love to the maiden,
Till she followed his green and waving
plume through the forest,
And nevermore returned, nor was seen
again by her people.
Silent with wonder and strange surprise,
Evangeline listened
To the soft flow of her magical words,
till the region around her
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her
swarthy guest the enchantress.
Slowly over the tops of the Ozark
Mountains the moon rose,

EVANGELINE

Lighting the little tent, and with a
mysterious splendour

Touching the sombre leaves, and
embracing and filling the wood-
land.

With a delicious sound the brook rushed
by, and the branches

Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely
audible whispers.

Filled with the thoughts of love was
Evangeline's heart, but a secret,

Subtle sense crept in of pain and in-
definite terror,

As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into
the nest of the swallow.

It was no earthly fear. A breath from the
region of spirits

Seemed to float in the air of night; and
she felt for a moment

That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was
pursuing a phantom.

With this thought she slept, and the fear
and the phantom had vanished.

E V A N G E L I N E

Early upon the morrow the march
was resumed; and the Shawnee
Said, as they journeyed along,—“On the
western slope of these mountains
Dwells in his little village the Black Robe
chief of the Mission.

Much he teaches the people and tells
them of Mary and Jesus;
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and
weep with pain, as they hear him.”

Then, with a sudden and secret emotion,
Evangeline answered,—

“Let us go to the Mission, for there good
tidings await us!”

Thither they turned their steeds; and
behind a spur of the mountains,

Just as the sun went down, they heard a
murmur of voices,

And in a meadow green and broad, by
the bank of a river,

Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents
of the Jesuit Mission

Under a towering oak, that stood in the

EVANGELINE

midst of the village,
Knelt the Black Robe chief with his
children. A crucifix fastened
High on the trunk of the tree, and over-
shadowed by grape-vines,
Looked with its agonised face on the
multitude kneeling beneath it.
This was their rural chapel. Aloft,
through the intricate arches
Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their
vespers,
Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus
and sighs of the branches.
Silent, with heads uncovered, the trav-
ellers, nearer approaching,
Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined
in the evening devotions.
But when the service was done, and the
benediction had fallen
Forth from the hands of the priest, like
seed from the hands of the sower,
Slowly the reverend man advanced to the
strangers, and bade them

EVANGELINE

Welcome; and when they replied, he
smiled with benignant expression,
Hearing the homelike sounds of his
mother-tongue in the forest,
And, with words of kindness, conducted
them into his wigwam.

There upon mats and skins they repose,
and on cakes of the maize-ear
Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the
water-gourd of the teacher.

Soon was their story told; and the priest
with solemnity answered:—

“Not six suns have risen and set since
Gabriel, seated

On this mat by my side, where now the
maiden reposes,

Told me this same sad tale; then arose
and continued his journey!”

Soft was the voice of the priest, and he
spoke with an accent of kindness;

But on Evangeline’s heart fell his words
as in winter the snow-flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the

EVANGELINE

birds have departed.

“Far to the north he has gone,” continued the priest; “but in autumn, When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission.”

Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and submissive,

“Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted.”

So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the morrow,

Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and companions, Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other,—

Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that were springing Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now waving above her, Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves

EVANGELINE

interlacing, and forming
Cloisters for mendicant crows and gran-
aries pillaged by squirrels.
Then in the golden weather the maize
was husked, and the maidens
Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that
betokened a lover,
But at the crooked laughed, and called it
a thief in the corn-field.
Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline
brought not her lover.
“Patience!” the priest would say; “have
faith, and thy prayer will be answered!
Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its
head from the meadow,
See how its leaves are turned to the north,
as true as the magnet;
This is the compass-flower, that the
finger of God has planted
Here in the houseless wild, to direct the
traveller’s journey
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste
of the desert.

EVANGELINE

Such in the soul of man is faith. The
 blossoms of passion,
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter
 and fuller of fragrance,
But they beguile us, and lead us astray,
 and their odour is deadly.
Only this humble plant can guide us
 here, and hereafter
Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are
 wet with the dews of nepenthe.”

So came the autumn, and passed, and
 the winter,—yet Gabriel came not;
Blossomed the opening spring, and the
 notes of the robin and blue-bird
Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood,
 yet Gabriel came not.
But on the breath of the summer winds
 a rumour was wafted
Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or
 odour of blossom.
Far to the north and east, it said, in the
 Michigan forests,

EVANGELINE

Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the
Saginaw River.

And, with returning guides, that sought
the lakes of St. Lawrence,

Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went
from the Mission.

When over weary ways, by long and
perilous marches,

She had attained at length the depths of
the Michigan forests,

Found she the hunter's lodge deserted
and fallen to ruin!

Thus did the long sad years glide on,
and in seasons and places

Divers and distant far was seen the
wandering maiden;—

Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek
Moravian Missions,

Now in the noisy camps and the battle-
fields of the army,

Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and
populous cities.

EVANGELINE

Like a phantom she came, and passed
away unremembered.

Fair was she and young, when in hope
began the long journey;

Faded was she and old, when in dis-
appointment it ended.

Each succeeding year stole something
away from her beauty,

Leaving behind it, broader and deeper,
the gloom and the shadow.

Then there appeared and spread faint
streaks of grey o'er her forehead,

Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her
earthly horizon,

As in the eastern sky the first faint
streaks of the morning.

In that delightful land which is washed
by the Delaware waters,

Guarding in sylvan shades the name of
Penn the apostle,

Stands on the banks of its beautiful
stream the city he founded.

EVANGELINE

There all the air is balm, and the peach is
the emblem of beauty,
And the streets still re-echo the names of
the trees of the forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads
whose haunts they molested.
There from the troubled sea had Evan-
geline landed, an exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a
home and a country.
There old René Leblanc had died; and
when he departed,
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred
descendants.
Something at least there was in the
friendly streets of the city,
Something that spake to her heart, and
made her no longer a stranger;
And her ear was pleased with the Thee
and Thou of the Quakers,
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian
country,
Where all men were equal, and all were

EVANGELINE

brothers and sisters.

So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavour,

Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,

Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts and her footsteps.

As from the mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning

Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,

Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,

So fell the mists from her mind and she saw the world far below her,

Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and the pathway

Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the distance.

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,

Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld him,

EVANGELINE

Only more beautiful made by his death-
like silence and absence.

Into her thoughts of him time entered
not, for it was not.

Over him years had no power; he was
not changed, but transfigured;

He had become to her heart as one who is
dead, and not absent;

Patience and abnegation of self, and
devotion to others

This was the lesson a life of trial and
sorrow had taught her.

So was her love diffused, but, like to
some odorous spices,

Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling
the air with aroma.

Other hope has she none, nor wish in
life, but to follow

Meekly, with reverent steps the sacred
feet of her Saviour.

Thus many years she lived as a Sister of
Mercy; frequenting

Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded

EVANGELINE

lanes of the city,
Where distress and want concealed themselves from the sunlight,
Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.
Night after night, when the world was asleep, as the watchman repeated Loud through the gusty streets, that all was well in the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper.
Day after day, in the grey of the dawn, as slow through the suburbs Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits for the market,
Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild pigeons,
Darkening the sun in their flight, with

E V A N G E L I N E

naught in their craws but an acorn.
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the
month of September,

Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads
to a lake in the meadow,

So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its
natural margin,

Spread to a brackish lake, the silver
stream of existence.

Wealth had no power to bribe, nor
beauty to charm, the oppressor;

But all perished alike beneath the scourge
of his anger;—

Only, alas! the poor, who had neither
friends nor attendants,

Crept away to die in the almshouse,
home of the homeless.

Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst
of meadows and woodlands;—

Now the city surrounds it; but still,
with its gateway and wicket

Meek, in the midst of splendour, its
humble walls seemed to echo

EVANGELINE

Softly the words of the Lord:—"The
poor ye always have with you."
Thither, by night and by day, came the
Sister of Mercy. The dying
Looked up into her face, and thought,
indeed, to behold there
Gleams of celestial light encircle her fore-
head with splendour
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of
saints and apostles,
Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen
at a distance,
Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of
the city celestial,
Into whose shining gates ere long their
spirits would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through
the streets, deserted and silent,
Wending her quiet way, she entered the
door of the almshouse.
Sweet on the summer air was the odour of
flowers in the garden;

EVANGELINE

And she paused on her way to gather the
 fairest among them,
That the dying once more might rejoice
 in their fragrance and beauty.
Then, as she mounted the stairs to the
 corridors, cooled by the east-wind,
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes
 from the belfry of Christ Church,
While, intermingled with these, across
 the meadows were wafted
Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the
 Swedes in their church at Wicaco.
Soft as descending wings fell the calm of
 the hour on her spirit:
Something within her said,—“At length
 thy trials are ended;”
And, with light in her looks, she entered
 the chambers of sickness.
Noiselessly moved about the assiduous
 careful attendants,
Moistening the feverish lip, and the
 aching brow, and in silence
Closing the sightless eyes of the dead,

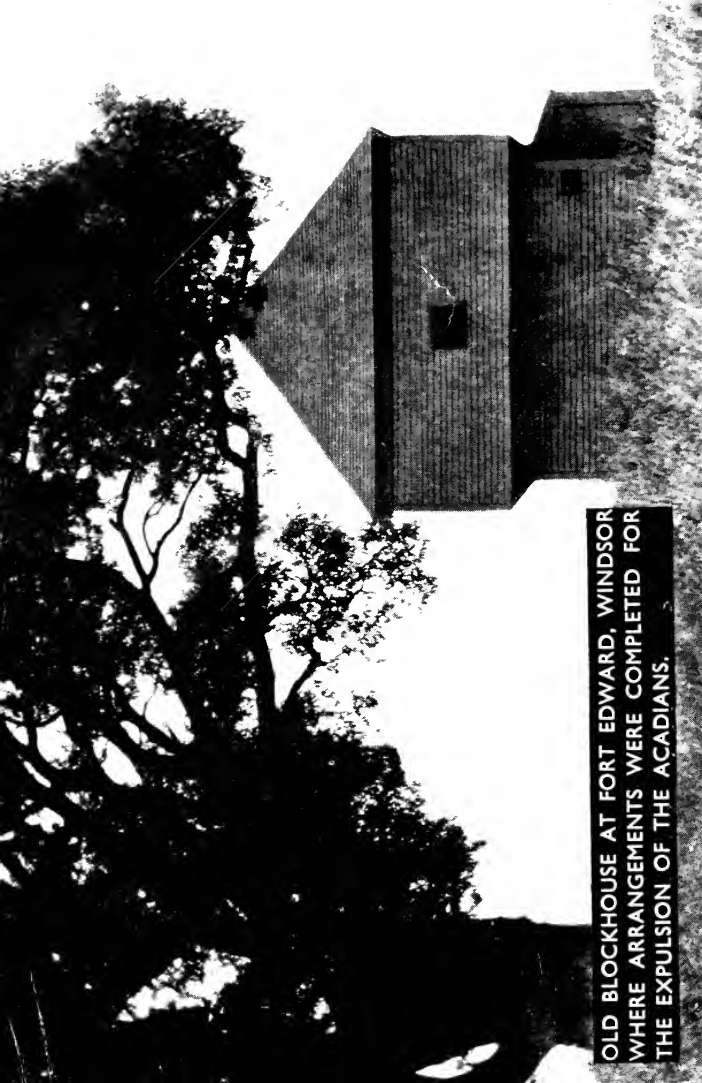
EVANGELINE

and concealing their faces,
Where on their pallets they lay, like
drifts of snow by the roadside.
Many a languid head, upraised as Evan-
geline entered,
Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze
while she passed, for her presence
Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun
on the walls of a prison.
And, as she looked around, she saw how
Death, the consoler,
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had
healed it for ever.
Many familiar forms had disappeared in
the night time;
Vacant their places were, or filled already
by strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a
feeling of wonder,
Still she stood, with her colourless lips
apart, while a shudder
Ran through her frame, and, forgotten,

EVANGELINE

the flowerets dropped from her
fingers,
And from her eyes and cheeks the light
and bloom of the morning.
Then there escaped from her lips a cry
of such terrible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up
from their pillows.
On the pallet before her was stretched the
form of an old man.
Long, and thin, and gray were the locks
that shaded his temples;
But, as he lay in the morning light, his
face for a moment
Seemed to assume once more the forms
of its earlier manhood;
So are wont to be changed the faces of
those who are dying.
Hot and red on his lips still burned the
flush of the fever,
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood
had besprinkled its portals,
That the Angel of Death might see the



**OLD BLOCKHOUSE AT FORT EDWARD, WINDSOR
WHERE ARRANGEMENTS WERE COMPLETED FOR
THE EXPULSION OF THE ACADIANS.**



EVANGELINE

sign, and pass over.

Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and
his spirit exhausted

Seemed to be sinking down through
infinite depths in the darkness,

Darkness of slumber and death, for ever
sinking and sinking.

Then through those realms of shade, in
multiplied reverberations,

Heard he that cry of pain, and through
the hush that succeeded

Whispered a gentle voice, in accents
tender and saint-like,

“Gabriel! O my beloved!” and died away
into silence.

Then he beheld, in a dream, once more
the home of his childhood;

Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan
rivers among them,

Village, and mountain, and woodlands;
and, walking under their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline
rose in his vision.

EVANGELINE

Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly
he lifted his eyelids,
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline
knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name,
for the accents unuttered
Died on his lips, and their motion re-
vealed what his tongue would have
spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline,
kneeling beside him,
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head
on her bosom.

Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it
suddenly sank into darkness,
As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of
wind at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the
fear, and the sorrow,
All the aching of heart, the restless,
unsatisfied longing,
All the dull, deep pain, and constant

EVANGELINE

anguish of patience!

And, as she pressed once more the lifeless
head to her bosom,

Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured,
"Father, I thank thee!"

* * * * *

Still stands the forest primeval; but far
away from its shadow,

Side by side, in their nameless graves, the
lovers are sleeping.

Under the humble walls of the little
Catholic churchyard,

In the heart of the city, they lie, un-
known and unnoticed.

Daily the tides of life go ebbing and
flowing beside them,

Thousands of throbbing hearts, where
theirs are at rest and forever,

Thousands of aching brains, where theirs
no longer are busy,

Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs
have ceased from their labours,

Thousands of weary feet, where theirs

EVANGELINE

have completed their journey!

Still stands the forest primeval; but
under the shade of its branches
Dwells another race, with other customs
and language.

Only along the shore of the mournful
and misty Atlantic

Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose
fathers from exile

Wandered back to their native land to die
in its bosom.

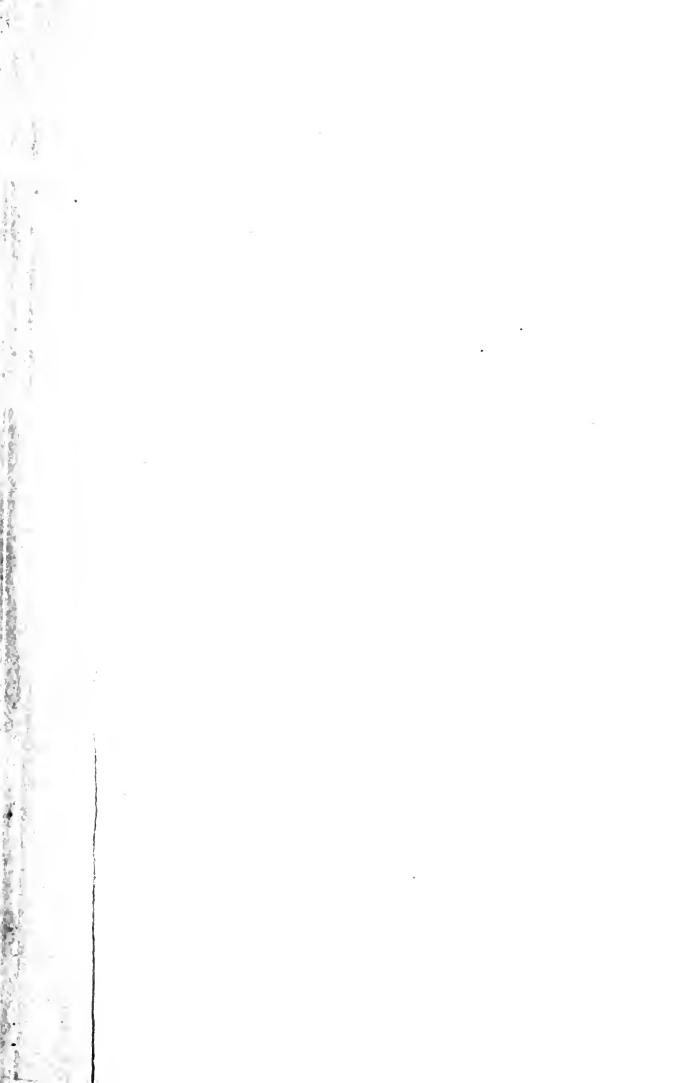
In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the
loom are still busy;

Maidens still wear their Norman caps
and their kirtles of home-spun,

And by the evening fire repeat Evan-
geline's story,

While from its rocky caverns the deep-
voiced, neighbouring ocean

Speaks, and in accents disconsolate
answers the wail of the forest.





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Ev ngeline

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